IRELAND

PAINTED BY FRANCIS S WALKER

DESCRIBED BY FRANK MATHEW

IRELAND

Bi ʒrá̇ḋ aʒainn air a ʒoirtiḃ, a maġaiḃ. a ʒleantaiḃ, a loċaiḃ, aʒur a ʃliaḃtaiḃ.

"Let us love her fields, her plains, her glens, her lakes, and her mountains."

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A WOMAN'S TASK

ALONG the north coast towards Gweedore and The Bloody Foreland the absence of men is remarkable. It is the women who carry the turf and dig the potatoes, which to those poor cottars are "breakfast, dinner, and supper all the year round."

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The Illustrations in this volume have been engraved in England by the Hentschel Colourtype Process.

PROLOGUE

THE OTHER COUNTRY

The fishermen of Connemara believe that an island not to be found by any voyage exists near their shore, and they call it the Other Country. That near and remote place is a symbol of Ireland. Giraldus Cambrensis wrote that Ireland "was separated from the rest of the known world, and in some sort to be distinguished as another world"; and among its early names there were two that support that opinion, the Oldest Place and the Country at the End of the Earth. If it was the Island of Saints, why did it produce so many sinners? If its people were always rightly renowned for courage, why did that never procure any success? By what spell did it conquer its conquerors, making so many stocks blend with the Irish? For what cause has it been haunted by trouble? Why has it given so much trouble to

England? Here are questions that ought to be answered; for even the many who care little about Ireland are concerned with the last of them, and this problem cannot be solved alone. In this book I propose to suggest answers to them and to others equally hard.

If you think that you know all about Ireland, you are probably wrong. It is an undiscovered country. As an Irishman, I can bear witness to the fact that its people are by no means agreed in their opinions about it. We are aware how difficult its problems remain, even in these days of enlightenment; and for that reason I shall leave you to take my views for what they are worth, which may be little or nothing. At least, they are honest, not consciously distorted by prejudice and quite unconcerned with politics. There is one point on which we are agreed: we are convinced that foreigners, and in especial our dear English neighbours, misunderstand us, and not seldom betray a deplorable ignorance.

This book will be no more than a quiet introduction to Ireland. If you are content with your knowledge, you had better throw it aside; those who pine for statistics must turn to somebody else, and so must all who require political wrangling.

In it you will have two impressions,—the Artist's and mine. Just as the Artist wandered where he chose and painted what he liked, without any thought of depicting notable scenes, so my independent description will not rival a Guide Book, nor be in any way detailed or complete. Yet it may be that this pleasant method of ours will impart a true notion.

If that notion is true, it must also be new. Let us take the Artist's work first. If you have not visited Ireland, the odds are that you think that it is wholly addicted to the wearing of the Green. Is it not called the Green Isle? Yet few pictures of his give that as a prominent colour, and many of them seize varying shades of brown. The truth is that Ireland has the colouring a wood has in the autumn. In the wide places of bogs and in the Highlands it is brown for the most part, though its tints change as the sky does above them, and are at times purple or red or black: the lesser hills are grey, and so are the moors. In these hues green is latent; it dwells in them as it does in the garb of a wood just before the leaves fall. One might say that one was aware of it without seeing it, as if it was implied. The grey of the hills and the moors will remind you of a mist over leaves.

Though there are some valleys in which the verdure resembles moss, it is more often wan and elusive. England has a far better right to be named the Green Isle, as is natural since it has so many more meadows and woods. Though Ireland was once called the Island of Woods, it is bare: now its verdure is spectral, as if it was haunted by the ghosts of the branches that covered it once. There is in that island an early and delicate light. All the colours are subdued and remote; they have a far purity as if they were seen very early in the morning. In this, as in other things, Ireland is a country apart.

As for my work, a good many people will find that my notion of Ireland is not theirs. Certain it is that all who have borrowed their ignorance from English or American humorists will form that conclusion. We have many accents in Ireland, some of them musical and all of them characteristic: when we hear a man speak we know whether he is one of the mournful and ruminating people of Connaught, or one of the light-hearted and eloquent natives of Cork. We have many shades of character too; each county has one of its own: when we know whence a man comes we trust or distrust him, like or dislike him, accord-

ingly. At the same time there is a pervading character common to all; it is visible or latent in us as our unusual green is in the many tints of our home. But this is not like the one given to us by English or American humour; neither are any accents of ours heard on the Stage.

In this introduction I shall describe Ireland briefly for the benefit of those who have never been there, and of those more fortunate people who will be glad to be reminded of the charms they have seen, and in so doing I shall accentuate some of those different characters, and then I shall dwell on the one that exists in them all. In other words, I shall deal with the nature of Ireland and with the consequent natures of Irishmen. You will be free to draw your own deductions from this. Of course I take it for granted that everyone has learnt Irish history; and therefore I need not relate how, in the earliest times of which anything is really known (for the tales of the Tuatha-dé-Danann, Fomorians and Fenians, cannot now be distinguished from Romance or Mythology), Ireland was peopled by Celts, or Gaels, who, according to Tacitus, were much superior to the Britons in culture and character; how they were divided in miniature nations perpetually at war; how, being

taught Christianity, they took to it kindly, and not only produced many saints but converted and educated their barbarous neighbours; how, either through a soldierly scorn of commerce—as their descendants prefer to believe—or through natural laziness—as Cambrensis alleged—they permitted their sea-going trade to be controlled by the Danes, who, in course of time, attempted to conquer them and succeeded in founding new cities and kingdoms; and how, some three hundred years afterwards, a few adventurous Norman Knights landed and carved separate realms for themselves. There is still less need to recount later history, for that would involve the debating of political questions; but I may remind you how the Norman Knights found the country still dislocated, as England had not been for hundreds of years, and in other ways little changed since it had first become Christian; how the English Kings meddled little with it till the times of the Tudors, being content to be its nominal Lords and to hold a narrow slice called the Pale; and how it so happened that England had just become Protestant when it began an effectual conquest, and how this (combined with the fact that the resistance was aided for political reasons by Catholic Spain and the Pope) made the

war a religious one; and how all who settled in Ireland before or after that time were subdued by its spell and very soon became Irish. If you recall these things, and consider the natures of the Irish and the English, and reflect that in modern times England could never safely allow Ireland to become independent, you may understand the Other Country's misfortunes. Their chief cause was the fact that Ireland has been, at all times and in every way, a country apart.

For that reason, it has been greatly misunderstood. It is my hope that I may be able to lessen this misunderstanding a little. We should not complain of it, for it has been caused by our own peculiarities. If foreigners take our lamentations and our quarrels too seriously, we have only ourselves to blame. I hope to prove that our natures are only difficult because they are simple, and that the two things for which Ireland is mainly remarkable are peace and content.

THE HIGHLANDS OF DONEGAL

IRELAND

CHAPTER I

THE HIGHLANDS OF DONEGAL

To avoid any appearance of partiality, I shall begin my brief description of Ireland in the remote nook of the North, among the ultimate mountains of Donegal. The name Donegal means the Fort of the Strangers. This detached nook has been the fort of the Irish, those perpetual strangers, the one fastness in which they have remained stubbornly rooted. It was ramparted from the rest of the country by difficult heights, and it was uncoveted, because it was mainly barren and mountainous, so it did not allure conquerors. It was included, of course, in the Partition of Ireland, when Oliver Cromwell attempted to herd the Irish Nation in Connaught while he gave the rest of the country to others. This part was one of the many he

bestowed on his veterans; but they were not pleased with it: smooth meadows would have been more to their mind, and, for obvious reasons, they did not enjoy being so far away from their friends. They were not favourably impressed by the natives. A good deal depends on the point of view; and even the warmest admirer of the peasants of Donegal will allow that some of their traits would be unpleasing to conquerors. Only a very obtuse or heroic man would have wished to find himself living among them as an enemy, and in possession of their land, when the winter made their dark valleys isolated again. So the few veterans who travelled so far went back to their comrades with a discouraging report; and in this nook Cromwell's benevolent plan failed. The shares he assigned were sold cheap; and the former inhabitants, though they had to recognise new landlords, remained undisturbed. This long immunity kept their stock pure; and their character now is the more deserving of study, because it can be taken as representative of that of the Irish before they were broken. This stock has been free from any alien infusion; it has not been weakened by blows, nor degraded by adversity.

No doubt, that character has been somewhat

SLIEVE LEAGUE ("THE MOUNTAIN OF THE FLAG STONES")

FROM Bunglass Point the view of the southern face of Slieve League, which rises abruptly from the sea to the height of 1889 feet, if once seen, can never be forgotten. The cliffs here are said to be the highest in Europe, and, in the opinion of the late Lord Leighton, who painted them as backgrounds to many of his classic compositions, the most impressive.

modified by compulsory peace. In the old days this land was Tir-Connell (Donegal then was only the name of a little fort set in a green place under mountains at the head of a long sheltered bay), and in this wild refuge the warlike O'Donnells were kings. The clans of Tir-Connell were great fighters: far counties remembered their devastating raids. When those congenial pursuits were forbidden, the race must have become gradually quiet. When the shrill pipes of the O'Donnell no longer excited the wailing whoop of the war-cry, men must have been subdued by the silence of the desolate places. Yet, while making allowance for this, we may conclude that the calm Highlanders greatly resemble the fierce kilted men who obeyed the Dark Daughter or her terrible son, Red Hugh. The clans of Tir-Connell, though mighty in war, were law-abiding and laborious in peace. Learning was held in great honour among them. The ruins of Kilbarron Castle, between Donegal and Ballyshannon, still speak of its former lords, the O'Clerys, three of whom were among the Four Masters whose Annals are still renowned; and on these shores there are many wrecks of abbeys and colleges. Those clans honoured piety too, and were, above all things, religious.

An Elizabethan map showed the territory of the different tribes by displaying the armed figures of chiefs: MacSwiney Fanad was depicted on his mountains, and near him, the head of his house, Owen Oge of the Battle-axe. These portraits gave the English notion of men who were supposed to be savages. This method of illustration was natural, for Queen Elizabeth's Deputies were only concerned with the question whether Owen was eager to wield his battle-axe, and they knew little about the men he commanded; but if the maker of that map had been acquainted with Donegal and had wished to draw a typical figure, he should have chosen Columba. Those grim chiefs bulked huge in their times, but now are commemorated only by names. For instance, there is in the high cliffs by Horn Head a cave through which the sea plunges in storms, with a noise like the report of a cannon; and it is called MacSwiney's Gun. You will find that the peasants know little about MacSwiney; but ask them about Saint Columba, and you will see them familiar with the whole of his life, though his bones had crumbled to dust hundreds of years before the English began their amiable efforts in Ireland.

Columba, or Columbkille, the Dove of the

A CORACLE, TORY ISLAND

THE coracle or curragh varies in shape on various parts of the coast. At Galway it resembles a section of a walnut shell, but in Donegal the high prow is for the purpose of resisting the great waves of this wild coast. It is very light, without a keel, and built on a frame with wicker sides covered with skin or tarred canvas. It costs about £2 10s.

Churches, was born in the year 521, by Lough Gartan. He became a monk and built his first monastery at Daire Calgach, the Oak Grove of Calgach, a place afterwards known as Daire Columbkille, in his honour, and now, having passed under a different influence, called Londonderry. Then he built several others, as at Gartan or Raphoe. These would have kept his memory green for a time; but the persistence of his fame is due rather to his warlike exploits. He caused two desperate wars, and was therefore exiled from Ireland, and betaking himself to Iona, peopled that solitude with monks and began the conversion of England. He was a lover of peace, ready to fight if the occasion was given; he was just and would not suffer injustice, was a poet, a scholar, a builder, hot-blooded and calm, energetic and passionately fond of his home. In all this he was a typical son of Donegal; and that is why he is still loved and revered, while less faulty saints are forgotten.

On a hill over Lough Gartan, there is a long slab of rock called Ethne's Bed, of which it is told that his mother lay on it when he was born; and it is believed that those who sleep on it will be proof against home-sickness for ever, for which

reason many emigrants bound westward have spent nights on it under the stars. This blessing is said to have been earned by his tears when he longed for his wild home during his banishment in wilder Iona; and the belief in it is a sign how that sorrow was understood by his people. Yet the place most associated now with his name is not Gartan, but Glen Columbkille, above Malinmore Head, where the heavy waves roll from the West. That deep glen is strangely calm, though it echoes the call of the sea. Often it echoes prayers and hymns too, for it is haunted by pilgrims. Twelve Crosses, tall shafts of grey stone, stand in it on hillocks: these are his "Stations," at which many still kneel as others have done, year after year, since he trod that smooth turf full of flowers. That place was hallowed long before he was born. Dark little hovels made of piled stones are scattered over it, and these (it is held) are of a date earlier than his. Even those Crosses are said to be Druidical monuments converted by him. All this country abounds in Cromlechs; and it seems certain that here, as at the Oak Grove, he chose a Sanctuary that once had beheld the rites of the Druids. The Glen seems immemorially sacred; it is like a vast church roofed

GLEN COLUMBKILLE HEAD

St Columbkille or Columba, after whom this headland is named, learning that a neighbouring king had an illuminated manuscript of the Gospels, asked for a copy of it, but was refused. He, however, obtained one by stealth, which was claimed by the original owner, and this right denied led to war. The Gospels in the king's army were carried instead of a standard, and thus called "The Battle Book." Neither side being victorious, the cause was submitted to Cormac, king of Meath, and his decision was: "As the calf belongs to the cow, so does the copy to the original." This being against Columba, he was further banished from Ireland until he had saved as many souls as were lost by war. It is said that it was from Glen Columbkille Head that he departed with his followers to Iona in Scotland.

by the sky. The far sound of the waves and the voices of the pilgrims are hushed, and only remind you that silence is absolute there.

Glen Columbkille is the heart of Donegal. And if you wish to know the hearts of the people, you can best understand them in that solitude. The neighbouring cliffs are sheer walls. Glen Head stands erect, eight hundred feet high, and is dwarfed by the precipitous flank of Sleive League over Carrick. From the brink of Sleive League you see the waves flash eighteen hundred feet below. Nor are the inland heights gradual; Mount Muckish, for instance, and Mount Errigal have sides that resemble gigantic fortifications. The granite walls by the sea are grimly defensive. Yet many smooth strands are beneath them, and many calm inlets, such as Lough Swilly, the Lake of Shadows, are sheltered. The shadow of the mountains beside it gave Lough Swilly that name; but it is justified also by the memories of the chiefs of Tir-Connell. Many were the battles they fought beside it: Red Hugh, that firebrand of the mountains, was captured on it in his boyhood, and it was made famous by the Flight of the Earls. Down to its shore, on a dark September morning in 1607, came the great Earl of Tyrone and his

confederate, the Earl of Tyr-Connell, when having abandoned hope, they forsook Ireland for ever. Their long struggle was over; and for them only remained brief exile in defeat and then rest where the high Church of San Pietro in Montorio looks over Rome. From this quiet water they passed away and were shadows; but the din of those battles and the passionate laments of that morning did not avail to break the peace of this haven. They were momentary; but that was eternal. In all these indomitable Highlands you feel that there is peace at the core. Those savage ramparts protect the level sands and the shadowy bays and the dedicated hollows; the most stern and the wildest of all guard Glen Columbkille.

The Highlanders, as you see them to-day, are calm and laborious, they are peaceful, and yet it is wiser not to meddle with them. This is a hardy stock and a silent one, moulded by solitude and a seafaring life. Because they live among rocks, they have to dare the North Atlantic for food, or cross the rough Moyle to cut the harvests of strangers. They do this with little reluctance, for they have been strengthened by the vigorous air: here you find none of the terror with which the fishermen of Connemara regard the ocean; neither

A DONEGAL HARVEST

THE road from Doochary Bridge to Fintown crosses a very wild district, where life seems barely possible, yet I saw a piece of land created by being dug out of a bog, surrounded on all sides by high rocks; it was built up out of the water and levelled on the top, and a crop of corn was subsequently sown and reaped upon it.—To my mind, a remarkable example of the industry and thrift of the people.

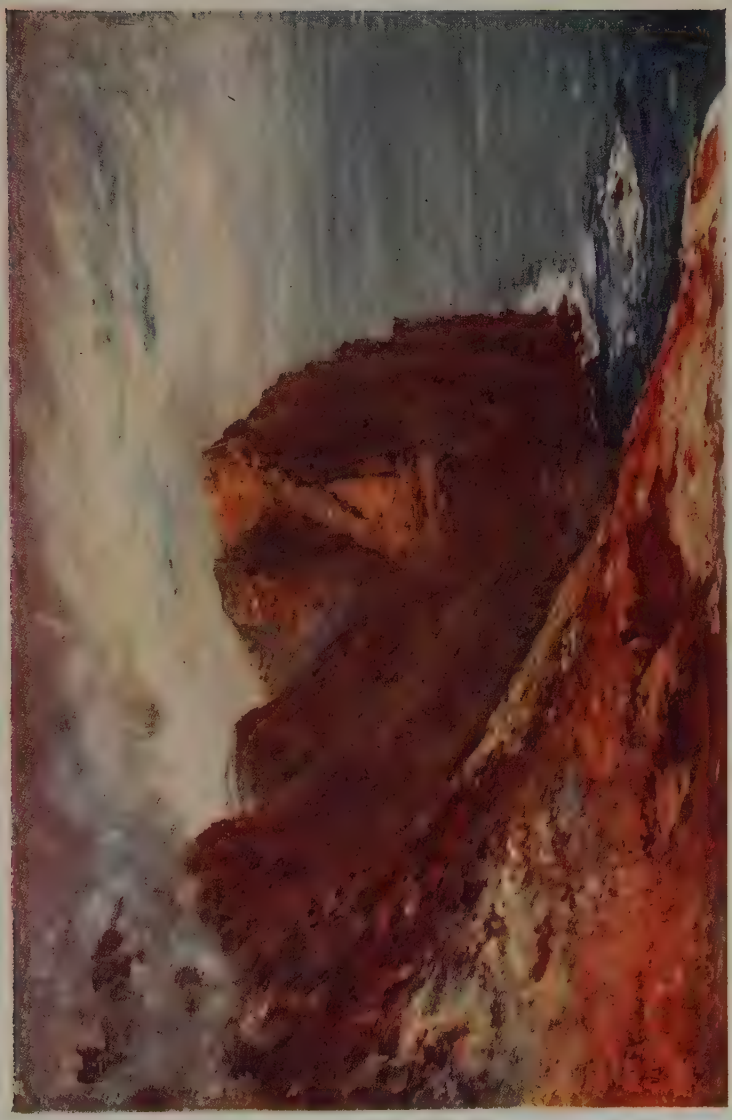
will you observe their despairing melancholy. If these have a melancholy look, as they have often, you feel that their sadness is a pleasure to them and a wholesome one. They have the brave pride of independence. In no land will you see a more dignified hospitality. Even the poorest man is proud of his home, and with reason, for however rude it may be, it represents infinite toil. You will find their crops growing in unnatural places, on the sandy edges of cliffs and up in the mountains between clusters of rocks, and you will learn that some of these high fields have been made by the simple process of carrying the soil from beneath. You will see young girls digging potatoes, or tugging the nets, or carrying heavy creels on their backs up the long mountain paths; and the rough cabins are musical with the murmur of looms. Here the old ways of extracting dyes from the heather are followed, and so are the old methods of weaving that are not to be rivalled by any machine. When there is such industry, one might expect comparative wealth; but that is not to be found. This is one of the poorest peoples on the face of the earth, and one of the happiest. Hard though their life is, it is lit by an inner content. Though their home is so stern, they can imagine no worse

calamity than exile from it. Life is full of labour for them; but the peace of Glen Columbkille abides in their hearts.

There is in these Highlands a singular freshness. You feel as if the air had been kept from any taint by the barrier that holds them secluded; this is a morning country still undefiled. It is no wonder that its people are choked by the thick air of other lands and are fain to return even though they have slept on Ethne's Bed under the stars. Neither can they find anywhere else a country more beautiful, for wild though it is, it has a magical colouring, and if that is subdued it lends the more charm to the vivid face of the sea. You will never forget Horn Head, if you see it on a bright windy morning, when the many colours scurry across it and beneath it the sea flashes and varies and the long yellow sands of Tramore glitter like gold.

HORN HEAD, DONEGAL

THE Head gets its name from the horn-like rocks which rise more than 600 feet from the sea.



THE FORT OF THE STRANGERS

CHAPTER II

THE FORT OF THE STRANGERS

Tir-Connell was sundered from hostile Tir-Owen by placid Lough Foyle. The O'Donnells were lords on one side of that long sheltered bay, in the last time of the clans, and the O'Neills on the other. Minor chiefs were obeyed; Inishowen, the dark country between Lough Foyle and Lough Swilly, was ruled by the O'Doghertys and the opposite hills by the O'Cahans; but the two greater houses overshadowed these and acknowledged no rivals except those dangerous Scots, the MacDonnells of Antrim. In the same way Lough Foyle now divides the Celtic and Catholic part of the North from the Protestant and colonised one. The latter might well be named the Fort of the Strangers.

Even the country is different when once you have crossed Lough Foyle. This is a castellated

coast. Tory Island was named Torach, the Island of Towers, from its high broken cliffs; and this coast suggests the same title. Instead of the solid granite fortifications of Donegal, there are shattered black buttresses and pillars and towers of basalt. If you pass on the sea, you are often apt to mistake them for strongholds in ruins. Indeed, it is told that the galleons of the Armada bombarded one of these military cliffs. Old legends assert that these were fantastically shaped by the Devil, with intent to deceive; but some authorities hold that their castellation was the pastime of Giants. There were, it seems, many Giants hereabouts once. There was, for instance, Balor of the Mighty Blows, who, unless the Four Masters were mistaken, inhabited Tory Island and was doubly redoubtable because he had an eye in the back of his head. There was that chivalrous one who took the trouble to build the Giant's Causeway, arranging its unnatural tiers so that another who lived in Scotland could come over to fight him without inconvenience. Among these riven towers there are others erected by ordinary men, the stark ruins of castles perched high, as if they had been meant to be out of harm's way, but none the less shattered long ago and abandoned to the fury of storms.

A HOME IN DONEGAL

In many of the peasants' houses in the north of Ireland the weaving of cloth and carpets is carried on by the men. The women do the spinning and dyeing, so that the whole family partakes in the work, which is often very beautiful, both in colouring and quality.

All these were subdued to the likeness of the neighbouring cliffs. When you see the proudest of all, Dunluce Castle, looming out of the mist from its high separated rock, you might easily think it a part of the ruined sea-wall beside it. You might imagine that only a Giant could have planted it there.

This long castellation defends a country quite unlike Donegal, for here you are no longer in mountains, and as you go eastwards you see the hills dwindle and the land become fertile. When you come to the coast facing Scotland you no longer behold that savage and fantastic defence. The eastern shore of Ireland is all comparatively low and unguarded, and so is most of the southern one, while along the north and the west there are mountains. It so happened that the open side faced Scotland and England, and that was why it was colonised while the mountains were left to the Celts. Even in Protestant Antrim there is a Celtic and Catholic fringe along the cliffs on the north: there you will find the descendants of the intrusive MacDonnells.

The level parts of Antrim and Down were always attractive to foreigners. The Danes found their way there, and so did the Normans, and then came the Highland Scots, who, though a kindred

race and indeed, if the old Annals are right, originally Irish, were regarded as aliens. Whether the steps of the Causeway ever extended to the opposite Highlands or not, there was at all times an intercourse over the Moyle. Then the Scottish MacDonnells of the Isles became possessed of a territory in Antrim and afterwards of Rachray, Rathlin Island, that pile of black and white basalt, and later of the coast by Dunluce. There they remained, for Randal MacDonnell, the first Lord Antrim, was permitted to keep that barren place when forty thousand more desirable acres were sold to London Companies after the Flight of the Earls.

In that year the history of the Protestant North began. The O'Neills had been Lords of Tir-Owen, the country between Lough Erne and the mouth of the Lagan River, from time immemorial. Like the O'Donnells, they had been greatest at the end of their time. Shane the Proud, the first Earl of Tyrone, had struck for the Crown of All Ireland, and might have secured it if his own countrymen had sided with him. The second and greater Earl of Tyrone had joined hands with his rival, Red Hugh, and had shaken the grip of England again; but after his many wars he had knelt to a dead woman. When in Dublin Castle he had done

TRAMORE STRAND

TRAMORE STRAND is the nearest point to Tory Island, which can be seen on the horizon nine miles off. Some time ago the inhabitants of this island were unable to pay rent, so a gunboat was sent to remove them to the workhouse on the mainland. It was, however, wrecked on the rocks, and as no further attempt has been made to remove the inhabitants, it is said that they still pay no rent.

homage to Queen Elizabeth in ignorance of her death (for that news had been kept from him lest he should refuse to surrender to a feeble antagonist) he had doomed himself to that miserable exile in Rome. And great was his fall. In that year Tir-Owen passed from the Catholic and rebellious O'Neills. At the mouth of the Lagan River now flourishes Ireland's most loyal and Protestant city, Belfast.

Beal-na-Farsad, the Mouth of the Ford, was merely a name till a castle was built there by De Courcy, one of the first Norman adventurers. This, though burnt soon, was restored, and in 1612 it was granted to Chichester who built a small town and imported many staunch Presbyterians from the lowlands of Scotland. These men made Belfast. Though its greatness is modern, for it was a modest town seventy years ago, it has been a strong Fort of the Strangers. These strangers, like all others who settled in Ireland, soon became Irish; but though none surpassed them in love of that country, they remained hostile to its older inhabitants. Belfast now expands year by year, building tall ships and manufacturing with American energy. It has the keen and hard life of an American town. Loyal though it is now, it

was for a long time imbued with a Republican spirit; it has always been noted for a stern independence. Though it is the capital of the Black North and the chief stronghold of the Orange Society, it is proud to be Irish.

The Black North is a name used by Catholics elsewhere in Ireland, and is applied only to this Protestant portion. Black, in this case, I fancy, means bigoted and is suggestive of scowls. When the Danes invaded Ireland the natives distinguished between them, calling some the White Pagans and others the Black. Since it is probable that all were of fair complexions, historians have been puzzled by this; but may it not have been caused by the fact that one set of them exceeded the other in ferocity? It seems safe to conclude that the White Pagans were detested the least. Again there is an Irish phrase, the White-headed Boy, meaning the favourite, from which we may infer that white is an adjective implying esteem. Certain it is that black when applied to the North expresses dislike, and that this is reciprocated. Lough Foyle still separates enemies.

If that separation had been complete, the Protestant North might have been peaceful. The strife for which it is famous has been caused by

the fact that the Catholics refused to be ousted. Though in some of the towns, as in Coleraine, they are few, in others, as in Londonderry and in Belfast, they are many, and that is the reason why these enjoy excellent riots. Coleraine and Londonderry were both assigned to the Irish Society of London in 1612 after the Flight of the Earls had left the coast clear for the Plantation of Ulster; but while the former was little more than a site and was successfully made Protestant, Derry-Columbkille was a place hallowed in Catholic eyes, and was an outpost in Tir-Connell, built as it was on the left bank of Lough Foyle. Such causes as these moulded the fate of the towns; but in the fields the struggle was general. The Catholic peasants, having nowhere to go, were reluctant to move, and also they were fond of their homes: even if they were driven out, they returned when it was possible. Thus the Scottish and English colonisation of these counties after 1612 led to long years of war. In the course of time, many of the colonists formed a Secret Society (note the effect of Irish air on them) calling themselves the Peep-o'-Day Boys. The members of this society were accustomed to visit their Catholic neighbours at dawn and give them the option "to

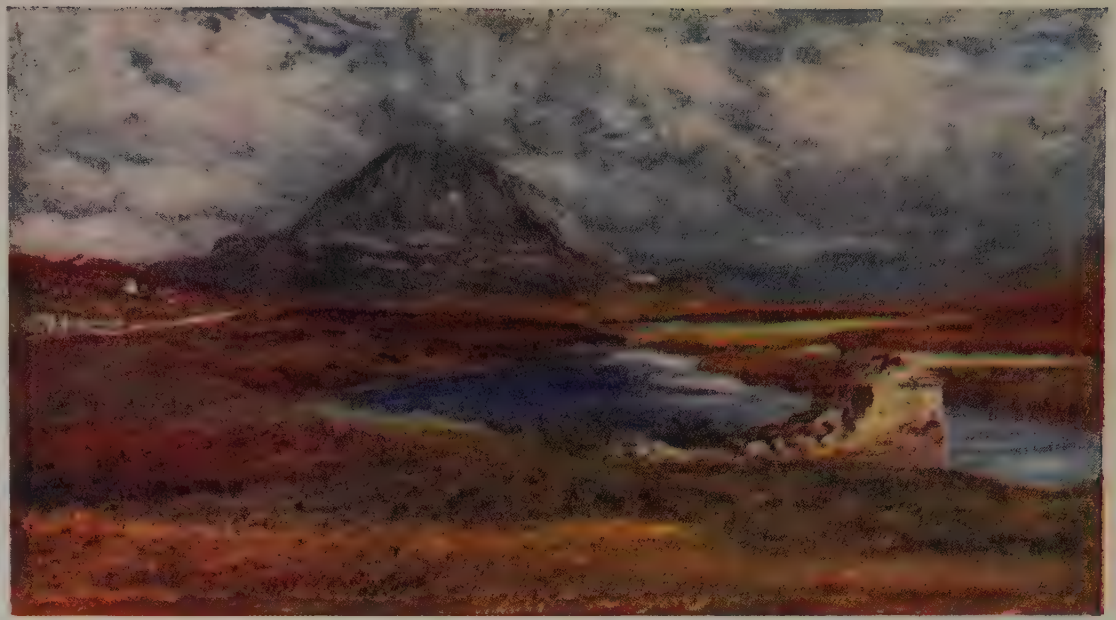
Hell or to Connaught." On this, the Catholic peasants, not to be outdone, formed another called the Defenders. There was little to choose between them: they were equally murderous. Then in 1795 an affray between some Defenders and some Protestants caused the formation of the Orange Society. Since which time Ireland has heard a good deal of the Orangemen.

The Orange Society was benevolent and defensive. It did not forget the military rule that a defence should be offensive at times, and its good will was kept for its members. It was formed for mutual help and to maintain the laws and the peace of the country and to ensure the Protestant Ascendency. There is, unfortunately, reason to doubt whether it was successful in maintaining the peace. It had a great veneration for Oliver Cromwell and for William of Orange; and neither of these was remembered with love by the Catholics. When it honoured them publicly, blows were exchanged. On the other hand, it was opposed to the Pope, and it not seldom discouraged the Catholic religion with violence. For these reasons its name has been more than once associated with riots.

When you consider these, you should not

MOUNT ERRIGAL

ERRIGAL, the highest mountain of Donegal, is very bare, with hardly any sign of vegetation. I remarked to a native that I thought from its shape it was of volcanic origin. He replied, "Ah, not at all, it's that way since the memory of man."



forget the common pugnacity. Only an Irishman could appreciate the fierce joy of shouting "to Hell wid the Pope!" Many a man who had no claim to belong to the Orange Society has known the delight of breaking Catholic heads or of going down in a lost battle, outnumbered but damaging his foes to the last. Many who are slow to attend Mass are quick to seize their cudgels and charge, regardless of numbers, when they hear the Orange bands play the tune of Boyne Water. These frays represent the old Faction-fights. They have a charm of their own, since the combatants feel their efforts are pious, because they are made in the name of Religion. Like the Crusaders of old, whose spirit survives in them, the Protestant and Catholic champions feel that by their battles they make amends for the errors and shortcomings of peace.

When all is said, these fights are now only occasional. Even over these counties there broods the infrangible peace of Ireland: you may forget it in Belfast, that loud hive of industry, but as soon as you go into the fields it lulls you again. Naturally, the Protestant North is most akin to its neighbour Donegal: you will observe the same industry, the same stubborn pride, and the same

self-respect; but you will not find the same poverty. Why are these Protestant counties the only ones really colonised? Why are they the only ones that have really prospered? The idea that they have succeeded commercially because they are Protestant and Scottish is mistaken. The industry and vigour are due to the different air of the North; and that is why they are no less visible in wild Donegal, though there, owing to the remoteness and the lack of organisation (for in spite of help it is still insufficient) they are poorly repaid. They are just as prominent among Irish Catholics in Antrim or Down. You must not suppose that even the Orange Society is Scottish; it has known many leaders of pure Irish descent, and among the names it honours now there is Kane, which is a form of O'Cahan. So too, some of the chief manufacturers are of Irish descent, and the best qualities of the North have been seen in such Catholics as Lord Russell of Killowen. But the success of the colonisation was due to the fact that most of the settlers were Scots and Protestants. Because they were Scots, they held together and found this new country congenial, since it was not greatly unlike their own and was near it; from its shores they could see the land

KILLOWEN

"ONCE on a time the giant Fin MacCoul lived hereabout. But," said my informant, "we had another giant born and reared here *lately*. Many of us knew him. You see that yellow house there beyond? It is the birthplace of Lord Russell of Killowen, Lord Chief Justice of England. You'd better take that down." Here it is—

they had left. Because they were Protestants, they were united against their Catholic neighbours. They landed in times when the two religions were everywhere openly hostile. Irish air made their children incapable of forgetting the past, and for that reason the old Puritan rage survives in them still. But they were more fortunate than the rest of the Irish in that their history only began in the year 1612; they had no bitter subjection to recall, no imaginary bliss to lament. Unity and a common belief in danger endowed them with strength, and in all their affairs they exhibited the ready and masterful spirit of soldiers. This example of theirs was not lost on the Catholics who remained in their midst. The colonised North has prospered because it was the Fort of the Strangers.

THE ENGLISH PALE

ROSSTREVOR

SITUATED on the inner corner of Carlingford Bay, with a mountainous background, the lower slopes of which are richly wooded to the sea, giving it the appearance of an inland lake. The climate is mild, and the place is therefore called the Mentone of Ireland.

CHAPTER III

THE ENGLISH PALE

BENEATH County Down begins the part longest held by England, and formerly called the Pale. When King Henry II. had seen the first success of his knights, Richard de Clare, Robert Fitz Stephen, Maurice FitzGerald, and their companions, he thought it time to assert his claim to a part of the spoils, but did not wish to attempt the conquest of Ireland; so he gave them leave to subdue the wilder parts at their own risk and expense, and declaring himself Overlord, he took possession of Dublin and of a long narrow tract of the country around it. This was to be the Royal foothold, from which at some future time he or a later King of England could conquer the country, after private adventurers had broken its strength. He gave orders (it is said) that a moat should be dug along its inner side, and that this boundary should be

studded with castles. There is no proof that the moat ever existed; but the castles were built, and the English Pale was defined. With that he was content, and so were most of the Kings who succeeded him, till the time for the Conquest arrived in the days of the Tudors. Richard II. and King John had other dreams; but after their intervention in Ireland they came under the spell of Irish misfortune. Meanwhile the descendants of those knights became Irish, thus adding a difficulty never foreseen by Henry II.; and the Pale, though it was held in subjection, could not be made English. In Henry VII.'s time it was limited by a line drawn from Dundalk in Louth to Kells in Meath, thence to Kilcullen in Kildare, and thence by Ballymore-Eustace, and Tallaght to the sea below Dublin.

All the included land was open and pleasant, not made dangerous by mountains or bogs or forests. It was a country framed for peace. Of course, since it was in Ireland peace was often denied to it. The recognition of the Pale was enough to cause many attacks; it was harried by the neighbouring chiefs, O'Connors, O'Mores, O'Carrolls, O'Tooles, and O'Byrnes, and by many of the Normans besides, when they happened to be at war with the Deputy after they had grown Irish.

TARA

"THERE was a royal residence on the hill of Tara before Rome was founded, before Athena's earliest shrine crowned the Acropolis of Athens, about the time perhaps that sacred Ilium first saw the hostile standards of the Kings of Hellas."—DR HEALY, Archbishop of Tuam, on *Tara, Pagan, and Christian.*

This sketch shows Tara at sunset, as it appears at the present time. The statue of St Patrick is quite modern, but the upright stone on the right, the Lia Fail or Stone of Destiny, is, according to Petrie, that which was brought by the colonisers from Greece, or by the Milesians; and which would cause "a black spot" to appear on any guilty man seated upon it. Keating, however, believed the original stone to have been carried to Scone in Scotland, and thence to Westminster Abbey, where, perhaps, under the Coronation Chair it may still rest.

In addition to this, its inmates had many little wars of their own; but of all these encounters there is hardly a token. The Pale is full of the loneliness and the stillness of Ireland.

If you go to Tara, the spot famous as the site of the chief palace of primitive days, you find only a little green hill with not even a ruin upon it, and the odds are that you hear no sound except the lowing of cattle. Whether that palace was ever magnificent, or owed all its fame to the regretful imagination of bards, it has vanished. Go to the banks of the Boyne, and you see only a calm weedy river winding among moderate hills. Yet there the fate of the British Isles was decided when the last Stuart King met William of Orange. Seek Drogheda, and though there are ramparts to testify to its former defence, you will find in it no suggestion of war.

Drogheda was broken by Cromwell. When he landed in Dublin in August 1648, he came not only to wreak retribution but to break Ireland once and for all. Nine months were allotted to the pitiless task. Here in Drogheda he began it by storming the fortress and putting all its defenders, two thousand five hundred men, to the sword; and elsewhere he continued it so zealously that when-

ever you ask a peasant in Leinster or Munster about a ruined castle or church of any period you will be told "Crummle desthroyed it." From this you might suppose that he would be remembered with hatred; but that is by no means the case: on the contrary, if you study the legends by which he is commemorated, you will find that the conduct ascribed to him is often magnanimous.

Take, for instance, the tale of his dealings with Lord Plunkett in Louth. Plunkett (so it is said) had lost his way in the dusk after a battle, and stopping to let his horse drink at a ford, was dimly aware of a rider doing the same on the opposite bank. Being worn out, he did not heed him at first; but then as he gazed down at the water, he saw the stranger's shadow and on it the glint of a star. With that he knew that he was opposite Cromwell, and since he could not reach him, he hurled his sword across at him, wounding him in the face, and then made his escape. On a later day he was captured and brought before Cromwell, who, mindful of that injury, said to him "I give you your choice of deaths." "Then," said Lord Plunkett, "give me back my good sword, and set any two of your officers to kill me with theirs." On this, Cromwell rewarded his courage by setting

CARLINGFORD LOUGH

A LAND-LOCKED arm of the sea surrounded by mountains, which shelter its shore and make the climate mild. The growth of vegetation is luxuriant; the fields and hedges about Warrenpoint, from which this sketch was made, are in spring a feast of flowers and blossoms. The giant Fin MacCoul lived on the mountain to the right. His outline is here shown against the sky reclining on its slope. Tradition states that in a moment of playfulness he threw across the lough "The Clough More," a granite boulder fifty tons in weight, where it can be seen to this day on the hill above Rosstrevor.

him free, only demanding that henceforth there should be in each generation of Plunketts one christened Oliver.

So the tale runs, and many others are like it. In many of them he is credited with that unpleasant humour of his. For instance, it is told how, when he had spared Jerpoint Abbey, marching past it, he heard its bells peal as soon as he had gone out of sight, and therefore returned and destroyed it, saying jocosely "this proves the folly of rejoicing too soon." The truth is that the Irish —like King Henry VIII.—honour manhood. Strafford, though he was a tyrant, was deeply lamented; and when Perrot, Queen Elizabeth's fierce Deputy, left Dublin, sailing to his doom, Irish chiefs stood on the shore and wept. So even in Cromwell's case the merits were recognised. Like Sarsfield, who (it is said) called to the victors on the banks of the Boyne, "Change Kings, and we'll fight the battle over again," the Irish peasants would rather have been commanded by Oliver than by treacherous Ormonde. In Drogheda his name now excites little emotion. The ruins he made are his monument; but nobody heeds them. The thought of that day of havoc is lost in the remembrance of quietude, for even

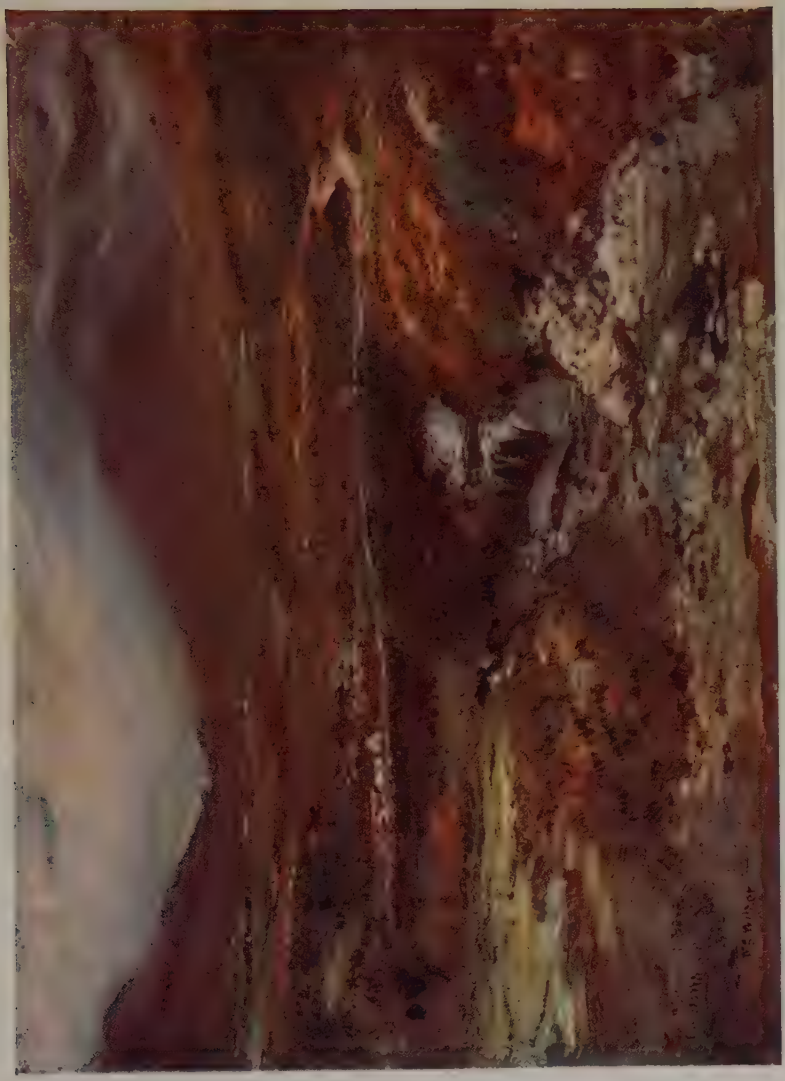
when the city was fortified it was enveloped by the peace of the Pale.

There are many ruins to be seen in the Pale, the hulks of great abbeys, such as Mellifont or Monasterboice, and the green wrecks of castles and churches. Some are old, and others are recent; but all seem alike: Irish weather has such a way of its own that one cannot discern what has been wrecked for a hundred years and what for a thousand. The abbeys suggest no violent desecration; the castles seem to have suffered a natural decay. You are not impelled to remember the tragedies of outlaws and conquerors: it seems that if there was ever war in the Pale, it must have been a very long time ago.

This impression is felt even in Dublin. You know well enough that the capital of Ireland has seen many agonies; but such associations appear unnatural. The thing you first notice is its depopulated look; its wide streets are so empty and so many of its big houses seem quite deserted that one could imagine that one was visiting a city abandoned by most of its inmates. Nor is this notion transitory; for when you explore outlying streets tenanted by the poorest, you find in them houses that must once have been splendid. Here,

THE BLOODY BRIDGE

Is near the base of Slieve Donard, the highest of the Mourne Mountains, almost thirty miles south of Belfast. It lies on the coach road from Newcastle *via* Kilkeel to Warrenpoint. This is a very beautiful drive, with the sea most of the way on the one side, and mountain scenery on the other.



you might think, is a city that was affluent once and has for some reason declined. You are not told of a tragical past, but of a former wealth.

Beyond doubt, Dublin was more prosperous once and more animated; but it never was rich. What about the merry old times when it boasted a Parliament? Tradition has glorified these, and it must be allowed that contemporary letters and newspapers tell of rejoicings then held in those desolate houses; but if you enquire closer, you find how unsubstantial those pageants were. Many of them were the insensate displays of a bankrupt magnificence: there were hours when the grey city was lit by the brief splendour of prodigals; but around that illusive light there was poverty, within sound of those irrational feasts there was starvation.

There is an old anonymous book, called *A Philosophical Survey of the South of Ireland in a Series of Letters to John Watkinson, M.D.*, which was neglected because it had the unusual merit of truth. The writer landed in Dublin in 1776, and comparing it with London, observed a deplorable contrast. "Here," he wrote, "we see little to cheer or exhilarate reflection, and much to sadden and depress the spirits. Here is indeed a motion;

but it is such as is seen when the pulse of life begins to stagnate, or like the wheel of some great machine just after the power which impelled it ceases to act. Here, to be sure, you meet some splendid equipages, and a large suite of lackeys after a sedan chair; you see a fair range or two of houses, and you frequently meet faces fair enough to make Circassia gaze; but all this scarcely compensates for the painful emotion produced by the general mass." Those were the days of which Sir Jonah Barrington wrote in his old age, recalling how boisterous Irish dissipation had been in his youth; but this traveller (Campbell, I believe, was his name) saw none of it, though elderly men told him how wild it had been when they were young. He was chilled by the sad and autumnal air of the city. In another way too, his account seems modern, for though he complained of many things, as of the street cries, which, he said, "tingle in your ears with all the enraging varieties of the brogue," he soon found himself growing fond of the place.

Dublin's attraction must be due partly to its wholesome sea air and its delightful surroundings; for it is planted on one of the most admirable bays and among rising fields behind which olive hills

AT KILLINEY

FROM the side of Victoria Hill, which is represented in the foreground of this sketch, the view over Dublin Bay is magnificent.

undulate. These first catch your eye when you enter the bay; they begin with the long headland of Howth, thence wind inland and come back to the sea at Killiney, and thence wander close to it. No town was ever more fortunately placed or more constantly dogged by misfortune. You feel this at once: from the first you are aware of Celtic resignation to sorrow. Dublin was first called (it is said) Bally-ath-Cliath, the Castle at the Ford of the Hurdles, and then Dubh-linn, the Black Stream, from its dark river, and it preserved this Celtic title throughout the long control of the Danes, though elsewhere, as in Wexford or Waterford, they named their strong towns. In the same way, despite the longer domination of England, it remains Celtic.

In the heart of the quiet city you come on a huge solid tower: this is all that is left of the Castle, the fortress that loomed over Ireland. In Queen Elizabeth's time it shadowed the life of the furthest clans; there was no chief, however remote his country might be, who did not dread it as a probable dungeon, and reflect that his head might blacken above it, spiked on its roof. Shane the Proud's head rotted there, food for the crows. Within its walls many were tortured, and even its

rulers, the Deputies, were acquainted with suffering; Kildare and Perrot and Essex and Strafford saw calamity coming, and from the Castle found their way to the Tower. Now its old strength has departed; the wide moat has vanished, and so has one of the twin strongholds, and the other remains an obsolete hulk.

If you are concerned with the past, you can find many old houses linked with desperate rebels or with hunted informers; but these remembrances appear as unnatural as those of the Castle. Dublin looks as if it was built for pleasure and quietness; indeed it has a curious resemblance to Paris, though you have to imagine that city fallen and resigned to its fall. This look and something friendly and homely in its ways have combined with its surroundings to lend it that peculiar attraction. But when you grow familiar with it, there is a different aspect. If you turn in to Saint Patrick's Cathedral, you see in its renovated darkness a slab on which is inscribed "Hic depositum est corpus Jonathan Swift, S.T.P., hujus Ecclesiæ Cathedralis Decani, ubi sœva indignatio ulterius cor lacerare nequit." There lies Dean Swift, where no man's heart can any longer be lacerated by savage indignation. Swift

FROM THE HILL OF HOWTH, DUBLIN

was a man of the Pale, born in this city, living for a long time outside it at Laracor, and ending in it his last miserable years. Though his indignation had other fuel besides the sorrows of Ireland, these made his heart burn. Those last words of his may remind you that Dublin has always been a city of pain. There is some shadow over it. In its indifferent peace there is something sepulchral. So there is in the strange calm that broods over all the realm of the Pale.

THE SALMON LEAP

THE Salmon Leap at Leixlip, on the Liffey, about 12 miles above Dublin, is one of the most beautiful points on the river, which from thence flows through miles of luxuriant woodlands.

THE IRISH PALE

CHAPTER IV

THE IRISH PALE

Opposite the English Pale lies the Irish one, the province of Connaught. When Cromwell had broken Ireland he reversed the old policy, and instead of retaining a part for the English, he left one for the Irish. In 1652 the Puritans announced that it was "not their intention to extirpate the whole nation," and in 1653 they proved this by enacting that its survivors should be permitted to live between the Atlantic and the Shannon. That river formed a natural moat along nearly all the inner side of Connaught; and this was to be strengthened by giving a belt of land next it to veteran soldiers. Since the enclosed land was especially unfit to be cultivated, there was reason to hope that most of the dwellers in that prison would soon be quiet. The Irish Reservation was decreased afterwards, for the counties of Leitrim

and Sligo were taken from it and assigned to the veterans, but not being appreciated by them, they, like Donegal, were left for the most part in the hands of the natives. And in later years they were stocked with exiles from the Protestant North. Thus, in spite of the attempt to except this northern corner of the province, the whole of Connaught was left, as the Puritan Parliament said, in an unintentional rhyme,

> "For the habitation
> Of the Irish Nation."

Cromwell's plan was not carried out with thoroughness. If anyone could prove that during the whole war he had been "actively constant" to the Commonwealth, he was exempted from transplantation, and so were all husbandmen who had not carried arms. Such exemptions should have been few; but they made it possible to purchase connivance, and thus some of the Irish remained in their homes. Others, in course of time, presumed to break out of the Pale and return. As for the new English settlers, they became Irish, so the plan only succeeded in causing a great deal of affliction.

The Irish Pale was an appropriate contrast to

THE QUAY, GALWAY

ALTHOUGH the houses here are more modern than the portion of the town said to be Spanish, they seemed to me quite foreign-looking.

the English one. The gaunt moors of Clare, the stark mountains and sedgy glens and wild bays of Connemara, and the windy hills and valleys about them, have a tragical look. You feel they could never have been prosperous; and they never were, for Connaught has always been full of battles and sorrows. It is true that it once had a prosperous city. In 1656 the Commissioners of Ireland alleged that, except London, there was in the British Islands no port more considerable than Galway; and though it is possible that they were inaccurate, since they were trying to sell forfeited houses, it is certain that they had some excuse for the statement. But Galway was Norman and English and Spanish while it was wealthy. It was quite aloof then from Connaught. From the year 1232, when it was built by Richard de Burgo, it was an isolated fortress controlled by families of Norman or English descent known as the Tribes. The names of these are Irish enough now; but in those days the men who bore them were classed among the English of Ireland. While these rich merchants had little affection for the English of England, they were proudly apart from the Old Irish, "the Os and the Macs." That was why the Corporation of Galway decreed that the Os and the Macs should not be

permitted to swagger in the streets. It is recorded that over one of their gates they had an inscription "From the Ferocious O'Flaherties, Good Lord Deliver us." It is probable that those "mountain men" were, on their part, inclined to echo the old chant of the Saxon monks, "A furore Normannorum, libera nos Domine!" The City of the Tribes trafficked with Spain and that made it Spanish. Even to-day you will see in that silent and desolate place many old houses that will remind you of the stately abodes of Spanish grandees; but in Cromwell's time these were already impoverished, for Queen Elizabeth's long struggle with Spain ruined Galway. By that time the Tribes had for the most part forsaken commerce, and were to be found up in the mountains. There they shared the ill-luck of Connaught, as the MacWilliams had done before. While Galway flourished apart, few were more detested by it than these MacWilliams, who sprang from the same stock as the Burkes, tracing their descent from the conquering house of De Burgo. They were in Mayo and in Connemara and in the hills behind Galway, and ranked with the Celtic stocks, the O'Flaherties who reigned by Lough Corrib, and the O'Briens of Thomond, and the sea-roving O'Malleys of Renvyle and the

DEEP-SEA FISHING, KILLERY BAY

STAND on some bold headland, as Renvyle or Salruck, that resists the full force of the Atlantic, and watch the distant hills changing every variety of colour in their rapid transit from sunlight to shadow, note wildfowl, the fisherman's guide, hovering over shoals, also the blue sky above and the deep blue water below, and you will have witnessed a scene that cannot be surpassed.

Islands. Now the MacWilliams are fallen, and the O'Flaherties are ferocious no more.

The Highlands of Connemara have long been held by the Galway Tribes; and to this day they are linked with such names as Martin, Blake, Morris, French, Burke, Bodkin, and D'Arcy. From these families sprang the most typical gentlemen of Ireland, the most reckless, the most gallant, the proudest. Here they lived free, for, as they said, the King's writ did not run in Connemara: here they observed the one set of laws respected in Ireland in the merry old times, the Galway Code of the Duel. Great hunters and fighters and drinkers, they rejoiced till the inevitable day of the reckoning. Now the gloom of Connemara—the darkness they loved because it heightened their defiant hilarity—has overcome them at last; Ballinahinch, the palace of the Martins, is silent; and Renvyle of the Blakes has become a hotel.

In the heart of the mountains, beyond the Pass of Kylemore, you will see a low wandering panelled house beside the Atlantic; this is Renvyle, and it is worth notice because it is a type. In the old days, while some prodigals built themselves castellated palaces, wiser men who preferred to spend their money on horses and claret, or to run

into debt for them, had a modest way of adding a wing to their houses whenever they thought one was required. From this resulted singular homes, many of them only one storey high, covering a great deal of ground. These had many advantages; it was possible for the ladies to sleep undisturbed at one end of them, no matter how joyous the men were at the other; there were no stairs down which a man would be apt to fall in the morning; and the long narrow corridors were pleasant to those who found it hard to direct their devious steps.

What became of the Irish Nation? Where are the descendants of all the families wrecked by that decree of the Parliament, and herded to live among these rocks if they could? Many of them had been rich, and were given proportionate tracts of wilderness, instead of the pastures of which they were deprived. There were Lords among them, and the heads of many of the chief families of the English of Ireland. No doubt, you will remember that the decree affected all Royalists, Protestant and Catholic, rich and poor, except the labourers who were permitted to stay in their cabins because the new owners would need their service. And they were all sent to particular places; Connaught was divided among the folk of the other provinces; the

Burren, for instance, was assigned to the exiles from Kerry, Roscommon to those from Kildare, Meath, Queen's County, and Dublin, while Connemara and Mayo were given to those from the North. This should make it easy to trace them; and one would expect to find their names prominent still in their compulsory homes. But very few of the landlords of Connaught are derived from them. It is not surprising that they failed to retain the Highlands, for in that part they were forestalled by the Tribes, and they could not rest there,—Connemara was horrible to them. One needs to be happy before one can enjoy outer gloom. But in the other parts they found lands which were not so unlike those they had lost. Then why have they vanished? They came here as exiles and did not take root in a soil detested by them, for in their eyes this was a place of punishment. Nor were they welcome in it, for its original stock, though pitying them, could not but resent their intrusion. That is why the fishermen of the Claddagh call anyone who intrudes in their midst "a transplanter." Many left Ireland for ever when they could, becoming soldiers of fortune in Austria, Spain, or France; the rest vanished from prominence because they were beggared. You will not find their descendants

SALMON-FISHING, CONNEMARA

"Perchance not deep, but intense and rapid,—
a mountain stream."

—James Clarence Mangan.

one, such as is natural to men who have suffered much with enforced patience at the hands of a usurper. With such a spirit the transplanted must have toiled in the rocks, quite broken, but never acknowledging Cromwell. You will find also that these men think little of the present and dream of an impossible past or future. It was by this means that the transplanted were enabled to live.

In other parts of Connaught the character of the peasants is different. The men of Clare are a strong and dangerous brood. No doubt, they have been hardened by the keen air of their storm-beaten moors. They are always on their guard, very slow to make friends, very quick to take umbrage; they have the look of men accustomed to watch for enemies and able to see them a long way off. And if you can win their hearts, their friendship is true. In Mayo the people are mild and often dejected, and very prone to self-pity. There the remembrance of misfortune is crushing. They lack the particular pride of sad Connemara and the embittered independence of Clare; they have borne too many blows in more recent times, for many of them are sprung from those driven with violence from the Protestant North. Such

distinctions of character are to be seen in each county of Connaught; but there is one thing common to all, and that is resentment. Much more than in any other province of Ireland, there is in the Irish Pale an abiding sense of injustice. That is the one fruit of Cromwell's plan.

After all, there is this to be said for him; he herded his victims in a beautiful prison. It is not probable that he was aware of the fact, for he never marched here, nor that he would have admired Connaught in any case; so we may conclude that this palliation was not intended by him. But there is an infinite charm in that country of sorrow. Though it was not there for the transplanted, their children have found it. You will feel it most in dark Connemara, the Land of the Bays of the Sea. Connemara is a country of shadows: on the bright days they drift on the waters, for the tarns and the inlets are all under hills, and they roam on the mountains when the weather is dark. To love it, you must first understand the pleasure of pain. And if you love it, you will think of it dark; you will not remember the brief sunshine but the days when the mountains seem to exult in defiance or to glory in suffer-

KILLERY BAY

THIS is the only Fjord in Ireland ; it runs inland 10 miles, and has sheltered the Channel Fleet. It was here the King landed for his tour through Connemara.

ing. All the wild country beyond the wild Shannon seems lulled in an unnatural sleep on days when the wind is still and the sun is out. When the storms rave in the mountains, the West is awake.

THE FIVE COUNTIES

CHAPTER V

THE FIVE COUNTIES

Cromwell was not content with enclosing the Irish; he determined that the whole seaboard on the Channel should be especially garrisoned. It so happened that Antrim and Down were held by the Presbyterian settlers, and that the English Pale had long been subjected; but the counties below Dublin required attention. In the old days, the watchmen aloft on Dublin Castle had seen a hostile country whenever their eyes were turned to the South, for the grey hills of Wicklow had always been retained by the Irish. That was the country of the warlike O'Tooles. This state of affairs had been in part remedied before he arrived, since the O'Tooles had been broken at last, and he had done something towards ending it when, after his triumph at Drogheda, he had marched ravaging from Dublin to Wexford. Still, he considered that there was room

THE PASS OF KYLEMORE

HERE is one of the finest combinations of mountain and lake scenery in Ireland; the hills, ranging from the richest brown to the deepest blue, are best seen after a storm.

inspired the ferocity of the rising of Ninety-Eight.

If the men of Connemara had risen, making a last desperate stand in the mountains in which they had been driven to bay, it would have appeared natural enough; but when you see Wexford's soft meadows and gradual moors and wide level roads under branches, and note the methodical and respectable lives of its people, it is hard to believe that this was the scene of Ireland's most frantic rebellion. There can be little doubt that if the peasants of Wexford had found a general worthy of the name in that year, 1798, and had been backed by their countrymen, they would have succeeded; but they had captains who knew nothing of war, and they were left to fight their battle alone. How was it that they succeeded at all, as they did for a time? It was, I think, mainly because they were among the least Irish of Irishmen.

It would not be safe to say this to a Wexford man, and indeed what other county has paid so great a price for the wearing of the Green? Yet the fact remains that this one had been continually stocked from abroad. The Danes peopled it when they built Wexford (Weissfiord they called it) at the mouth of the Slaney; the Normans first landed on its

southern shore on the Beaches of Bannow and copied the Danes; Strongbow colonised it from Wales, and to this day the folk of the Baronies of Bargy and Forth have much more in common with their Welsh kinsmen than with their neighbours of Ireland. Then more English settlers came, and then the Cromwellian flood, and afterwards Dutchmen. And through all this time, and probably from pre-historic days, there was a steady communion with Cornwall and Wales. Just as Antrim was always in touch with Scotland, so was Wexford with the opposite Celts on the other side of the Channel. From all this it came to pass that the men of Wexford had in their nature a foreign element. Because they were law-abiding and dogged, they were more dangerous when they were frenzied; because they had always lived in union, they struck together; and they rose, instead of talking about it and postponing it, because they were silent and not given to dreams.

In those days, there must have been in this county a look of Dutch primness. There were a great many windmills on the wide moors, and plenty of solid farms in the meadows. But in that terrible year most of those farms were wrecked, and now few of the windmills signal to one another—

you see many gaunt deserted towers in their places. One such tower, or rather the butt of one, stands on a green shoulder of the moors above ripe pleasant fields. From its narrow door you look down on quiet Enniscorthy, a cluster of old houses beside a weedy and shaded little river. The green side beneath the ruin is called Vinegar Hill. In that roofless butt the rebels imprisoned their victims; on that long slope they encamped, or huddled rather, with the sky as their roof, and made their last stand when all hope was gone.

Several years ago, I wandered alone over this county, seeking traditions of that rising. I found a very few old people who had been out as children, and many whose fathers and mothers had tramped in that army of fugitives. The rebels comprised men, women, and children of all ages; for when once that death-struggle had begun, the most peaceful and the most timid alike fled to the camps out of fear of the Yeomen. These Yeomen were Irish, and so were the Militia and the Fencibles, and nearly all the troops fighting for England, except the Hessian mercenaries. All these wreaked vengeance with a Puritan rage. It was a national affair; and each side showed Irish courage and Irish cruelty. It was an internecine Religious War:

A MOUNTAIN DWELLING

It is in journeying to habitations like this a pillion comes in useful. The occupant of one such house told me that "All food or anything necessary must be carried up on the back of man or beast. There never was a car at my door. There never was a doctor at my door, and I've thirteen children, all well, thank God! No, they're not all at home. Two are in America, one sojering in India, and two at service in England." "Quite cosmopolitans," said I. "No, all Catholics." "I mean travellers." "Then, why didn't you say that? I'm no traveller myself. I've never been in a railway train, and never outside the county myself."

Frances S Walker

quiet men, and so did not trouble to warn them of the change; or perhaps Wexford knew of it and would not take heed. Because its people were slow to make up their minds, they were the less likely to alter them. Besides, you must remember the dislocation of Ireland. Each county was aloof, as the Swiss Cantons are now and as the English Shires were once; and they could only have been united by following some common leader. The men who became Wexford's leaders were quite unknown out of it. For which reasons it came to pass that while the battle of New Ross was raging on one shore of the Barrow, the peasants of Kilkenny were seen digging and ploughing on the other.

New Ross had been in its time typical of Wexford; for its first fortifications were built to exclude its "naughtie and prowlying neighbours" (as Holinshed wrote), of whom the naughtiest just then was a Geraldine. This battle, its last, was typical too, not only of the ways of the county but also of those of all Ireland; for when it was begun by a mistake a great many of the rebels abandoned hope and their comrades. In the same way the other counties of Ireland, despairing before there was any need to despair, left the men of Antrim and Wexford without help. It is worth noting

that the only struggles in Ninety-Eight were in Protestant Antrim and in Cromwell's Five Counties.

Of these five the most frequented is Wicklow. This is due to its position near Dublin and to the fact that its charms have been made familiar by songs. It is not to be compared with the Highlands of the battered and mournful West; those are of sterner stuff. Here the hills are more pleasant and the smooth valleys find a quieter sea. Yet over it broods the sorrow of Ireland. Cromwell's work was done thoroughly: there is hardly a ruin to tell of the centuries of Irish defiance. Instead of ivied castles you see Georgian houses, all built to command delectable views. These suggest the enviable lives of retired tradesmen or of families who, drawing their rents from less fortunate places, chose to live here within the light of the Viceroy's Court. You may chance to remember other things, strange and true tales of the old chiefs, or incidents of the exterminating war, such as Coote's words when he slaughtered the children—("nits will be lice," said he, "nits will be lice")—and by that justification he expressed the spirit of all who hunted the Irish Wolves. But of such matters there is no trace, for Sidney and Coote and Cromwell eradicated even

NEAR RECESS, CONNEMARA

AFTER leaving Galway westward, we get the first impression of Connemara on approaching Recess; here the Twelve Pins, or Bens, standing clear and bare, without a vestige of foliage, dominate the landscape in all directions. They arise from what is practically a great plain through which run rapid streams, while close under the hills are several loughs that suggest a fisherman's paradise.

the ruins when at length they established in Wicklow the peace of the Pale.

In this sepulchral peace there is the suggestion of sanctity that was recognised when burial-grounds were called God's Acres. Wherever you go in Ireland you tread consecrated ground. Here among these mellow hills and serene valleys you find the restored domination of the primitive monks. It was restored by the English when they made Wicklow a solitude again. The castles of the chiefs were obliterated; but the rude huts and chapels that were so ancient in their time have survived. Visit Glendalough, that dim hidden lake, of which it is told that some spell forbade any bird to sing above it, and you will find it so mysteriously lulled and so separate that you could imagine it never profaned. It seems dedicated still to the men who in this refuge forgot transitory cares.

ORMONDE

CHAPTER VI

ORMONDE

One of Cromwell's Five Counties, Kildare, had been held for a long time by a branch of the Geraldines, the descendants of Maurice Fitz-Gerald; another, Wexford, had once been controlled by that successful adventurer (for Dermot of the Foreigners made him an overlord there) but later, becoming part of the Heritage of the Earl Marshal, it passed under the influence of the Butlers of Ormonde. Cromwell was not greatly concerned with the Geraldines, for of their two branches the one that held Kildare had been broken by Henry VIII. and made loyal to England, the other, the FitzGeralds of Desmond, had been almost annihilated in Elizabeth's reign; but he had much to do with the Butlers, for the Marquis of Ormonde commanded the Irish Nation. For hundreds of years these two Norman families

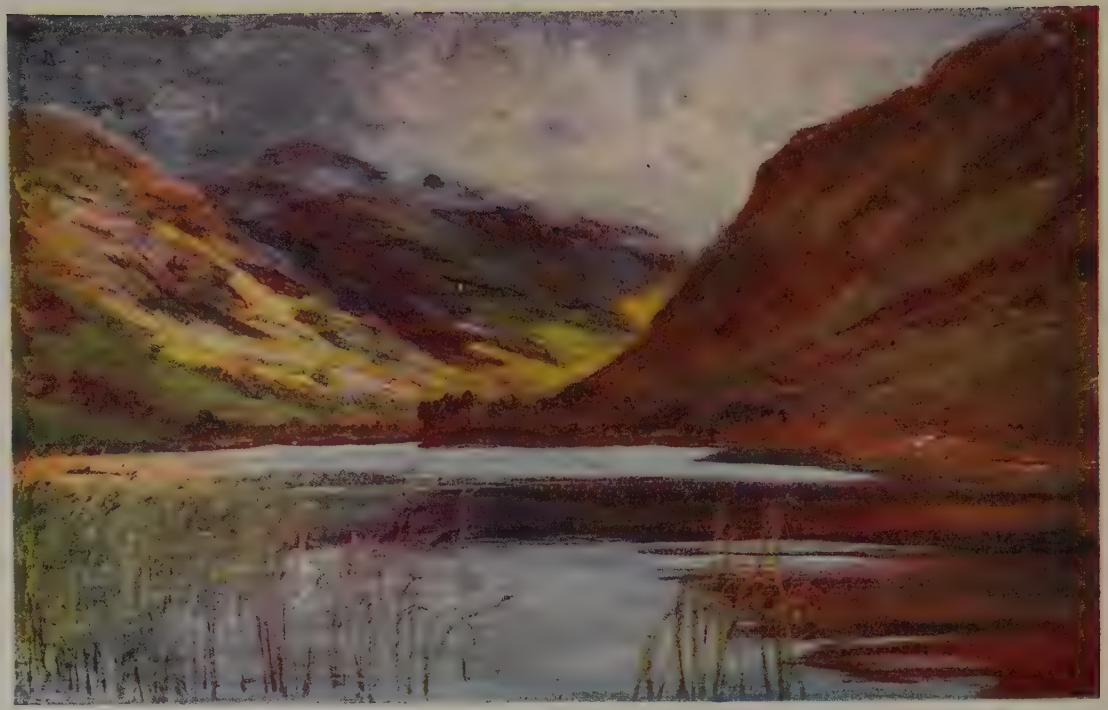
had been lords of the South; Munster was divided between them. It was lucky for England that they had been rivals, hating one another and struggling for mastery. Some one should write the epic of their inherited war.

One of the FitzGeralds had been made Earl of Kildare in 1316, and afterwards others of them had wrested a realm in Desmond, the south-western part of Ireland, from the MacCarthys, and had planted themselves also in Kilcolman and in Youghal and in the county of Waterford. One of the Butlers, who were descended from Theobald FitzWalter Le Boteler, had been made Earl of Carrick in 1315, and his successor had been made Earl of Ormonde (North Tipperary) in 1328, and their descendants, after being expelled from their first realm by the Old Irish, had established themselves in Kilkenny and Wexford. Beginning to rise at about the same time, these two Norman houses had flourished while greater ones fell; they were still expanding their realms long after the Heritage of the Earl Marshal and the Earldom of Ulster were things of the past.

At first, the Geraldines had prevailed in the long struggle between them, owing to the fact that Kildare was near Dublin and that their other

DELPHI LOUGH

WHICH is said to resemble the Greek valley of the same name, is surrounded by lofty mountains, averaging 2500 feet high, and is on the road which runs from Killery to Lough Doo and Louisburgh, and lies in one of the most impressive passes in Connemara.



strongholds were separate and out of the reach of the Deputies. Then the Butlers had gained an advantage, for the marriage of a daughter of their house to Thomas Boleyn, though at first it involved them in trouble, had given them influence later, and had afterwards made them Queen Elizabeth's kinsmen. By this means they had been enabled to abet King Henry VIII.'s subjection of the FitzGeralds of Kildare and afterwards to conquer the others when the Black Earl of Ormonde hunted the Crippled Geraldine down. During that inherited war these houses had filled the Annals of Munster with their interwoven tragedies. Where could you find a tale more romantic? Think of the Geraldines, and you will remember how the eighth Lord Kildare was made Deputy by Henry VII. because none could control him ("all Ireland cannot rule this earl?" said the King, "then let this earl rule all Ireland"), how the ninth, also a Deputy, was cast into the Tower by Henry VIII., and sent from it a silver heart and black dice to his son Silken Thomas, who then ruled in his stead, which tokens might have been read as a warning that any rash throw would be luckless, and that it would be well to be innocent, but were accepted as an appeal for vengeance, and

how Silken Thomas, riding to Dublin Castle, flung down his sword of state on the Council table and plunged into rebellion, thus dooming himself and four uncles of his to the gallows at Tyburn. Think of the Butlers of Ormonde, and you will recall many things as dramatic. The provinces of Leinster and Munster were for many a year greatly concerned with both of these houses; and each has left a mark on them still.

The fortunes of war gave the Geraldines a place in the affections of Ireland never gained by the Butlers. The vanquished cause is dear to the Irish; and it so happened that the Geraldines of Kildare and of Desmond went down in rebellion (one branch to rise again when it was subdued, and the other to be mighty no more), and thus won the name of patriots. In addition to this it was remembered that they had always been reckless and pious and open-handed and loving. Now none of these qualities were shown by their rivals. There were strong men in Munster before these families rose; but they have been for the most part forgotten. You will find legends of O'Donoghues, MacCarthys, O'Sullivans, and others, in Desmond, for in that country the Os and the Macs found it possible to live overshadowed by the Geraldines;

THE CLADDAGH

A PROSPEROUS village on the opposite side of Galway harbour. The natives are said to be a race distinct from the townsfolk, and to stand aloof from all, like "true blue blood." I regret I did not find this to be the case. I was soon surrounded by all sorts and sizes of the inhabitants, so very friendly, and with so many suggestions and requests, that I bade them a hasty good-bye, and took refuge on a vessel from which this sketch was made.

but even these are vague, and in the dominion of Ormonde, the realm of the Butlers, the old chiefs are forgotten, for that family ruled alone.

Kilkenny became the chief hold of the Butlers, for though in course of time they recaptured their former Palatinate, Tipperary, in one way or another, it was never so thoroughly theirs. Here they remained in spite of Cromwell; for the Marquis of Ormonde, though beaten for a time, was soon back and more flourishing than ever. Kilkenny Castle seems to denote their stable good-fortune; it has a look of immemorial security; and the city it dominates, Kilkenny of the Steeples, appears as fortunate. Indeed you could imagine that the whole county had shared that exceptional luck. It will seem vacant to you, if you compare it with an English shire, and its green valleys have Ireland's strange quietness, like the peace of a land recently swept by some terrible storm; but it will not suggest misery. It is orderly, because it is prosperous; as might be expected since it has so long been controlled by a house that was never accused of neglecting its friends.

In all this there is something deceptive. Most of that ivied castle is modern, and its ancient portion endured conquering sieges; that ecclesi-

astical city was sacked by Cromwell; and the folk of those valleys had more than their share of war. As for the Butlers, though they thrive now, it is after many vicissitudes. Yet they had a certain stability, an obstinate knack of surviving misfortunes and retaining their grip, and that kept this county Norman. Though you will not find many Norman names in it, you will remember that most of the knights and their followers took Irish ones after a time, and you will discern in the character of the people a better proof of that subjugating blend. They have the pride, the activity, and the shrewdness of Normans; for hundreds of years they have been very quarrelsome and very religious. They have fought much, and suffered greatly; but they have been permanent, and they have owed this to the Butlers; for when the Royalist Marquis, the first Duke of Ormonde, came home he made short work of the Cromwellian intruders.

It was not so on the neighbouring moors of Tipperary. This county, the heart of Ireland, and (unless I am misled by a natural kindness) the most excellently Irish of all, has attracted adventurers time after time; but it has made them its own. It was always a place of battles, and its appearance is martial. The bold moors bred

WILD RHODODENDRONS, CONNEMARA

fighters, and the rich fields were the spoils of the strong. There are few traces of the primitive wars or of the original Kings of Thomond and Munster: most of these are obliterated, and though you find only too many ruins, nearly all of them tell of subsequent strife. One indeed is a link with the more remote past: this is Cashel, the cathedral that stands high on a solitary rock. Cormac MacCullinane, King and Archbishop and Saint, began it in 827, though the chapel ascribed to him was built long afterwards by Cormac MacCarthy. The eighth Earl of Kildare burnt it—which outrage he excused by alleging that he had supposed that the Archbishop of Cashel was inside at the time — and Lord Inchiquin, "the Wavering Panther," sprang on it with his Puritans, stormed it through one of its painted windows, and filled its aisles with dead. So ended Cashel of the Kings. Holy Cross Abbey, too, dates from the times before the Normans arrived, having been begun by Donald O'Brien, King of Thomond. But almost every other ruin indicates Norman magnificence and the wars between the Butlers and Geraldines or the havoc wrought by Cromwell.

The people of Tipperary have a vivid remembrance of Oliver Cromwell and Murrough of the

Burnings. The latter—Lord Inchiquin—showed such ferocity that even still they say of any terrified man that "he has seen Murrough," and the former trampled the county in his second campaign. Oliver had no need to strike terror here, for he had done it sufficiently at Wexford and Drogheda, and few had the courage to brave his blood-stained sword. Several of the strong castles surrendered without striking a blow; for instance, Pierce Butler yielded Fethard, and George Mathew, Ormonde's half-brother, was as pliant at Cahir. Clonmel alone fought to the last, and in that case the garrison were men from the North under Black Hugh O'Neill. The South had lost heart, persuaded that resistance was vain.

Then no part of Ireland was more thoroughly cleared of its former proprietors. A few came back from Connaught, and others, who happened to be allied with the Butlers, regained their lands later; but most of the landlords and farmers were uprooted. The greater part of the county passed to Cromwellians, many of them Puritan officers who had purchased the shares assigned to their soldiers. These officers were short-sighted; for if they had encouraged the veterans to settle there, in accordance with Cromwell's plan, they would

BRAY HEAD, WICKLOW

Francis S Walker

not have been forced to permit so many Irish to remain or return. As it was, many of the peasants survived the storm that swept their masters away; but even the children of these have a foreign strain often, and you will find English names under the thatched roofs on the hills.

These peasants are a stubborn stock, to my mind the most manly and most worthy of honour in Ireland; they make strong farmers and excellent soldiers; they have a rough pride of their own, and a cheerful and bold cordiality. Here you find none of the subjected despondence of a broken race. As for the gentlemen, Cromwellians or not, of Fighting Tipperary, they were great in their time. They are decimated now and impoverished, and all their ways are over; but while they prospered and multiplied, they were second to none in exhibiting the virtues and the vices of Ireland. On these moors or in the meadows below them there are many old houses that were once famous and now are left desolate. Such a one, for instance, is Thomastown Castle. Just as Renvyle is a type of one kind of home, so Thomastown represented another. It was a huge castellated house: its upper story was crammed with many bedrooms and its other contained spacious and lofty halls. There

were gardens beside it, made after the English fashion, and full of terraces and hedges—clipped in the likeness of impossible birds—and statues and grottoes; and around it there lay an orderly park of two thousand acres. It was dedicated to hospitality, after the Irish fashion. Yet its owners, the Mathews, were but recently Irish, being descended from George Mathew of Llandaff, who married his cousin, Lady Thurles, the first Duke of Ormonde's mother, in 1637. Tipperary had conquered them soon. Under this roof was born Father Theobald Mathew, the Apostle of Temperance, who worked wonders for Ireland because he loved it so much and understood it so well. When you see such houses as this in Ireland (and they are many) you will nearly always discover that they were the homes of families of English descent. In their wildest days they had something English about them; and so have all the wide lands that were held by the Butlers of Ormonde, for that family through all its career remained English in many ways, as in its skill in appropriating desirable places; it never became as Irish as the Geraldines did.

LISMORE CASTLE

THE Irish seat of the Duke of Devonshire, is finely situated on the banks of the Blackwater. It occupies the site of the ancient College of Lismore, a seat of great learning, which had a European reputation, and numbered among its scholars Alfred the Great. There are no architectural remains of the College, but, built into the wall of the castle, was found a crozier, which dates back some 800 years, and compares favourably with some of the best specimens of Celtic art.

DESMOND

MYRTLE GROVE

SIR WALTER RALEIGH'S house, where he entertained Edmund Spenser ; and in the adjoining garden potatoes first grew in Ireland, and tobacco was first smoked.

CHAPTER VII

DESMOND

The homes of the Geraldines of Desmond were scattered about the counties of Limerick and Cork and Waterford and the Highlands of Kerry; but in these there were three great independent cities, and the realms of Irish chiefs, O'Sullivans, MacCarthys, O'Donoghues, O'Mahonys, and others, who, though despoiled of much, clung to their places. It was only in Kildare that the Geraldines were wholly supreme. This was one of the reasons why that family lost Desmond for ever, but survived in Kildare. Even in that county their home, Carton, is a modern house, built without any consideration of danger. When once they had fallen, their adventurous days were finished. By their own river Avon Dhuff, the Black Water, stands a proud castle, Lismore, fit to be compared with the Butlers' hold at Kilkenny; but this, though it was pro-

tected by them for a time, is not linked with their name. Raleigh owned it, and from him it passed to the Boyles, and from them to the house of Cavendish, and now it is held by the Duke of Devonshire, and lords it over a trim little English town. The castles in which the Geraldines of Desmond rejoiced are ruins in ivy.

Sir Walter Raleigh profited by their calamity, much to the disgust of the Black Earl of Ormonde, and if you visit the forlorn town of Youghal, you will be apt to overlook their traces in seeking his home, Myrtle Grove. Yet that green gabled house is a building of yesterday compared with Saint Mary's Cathedral, built by them long ago. The house and the ruins stand close together, one inhabited still, and often sought for the sake of the legends that in its garden tobacco was first smoked in Ireland and the potato first planted, and the other neglected, and indeed shunned out of fear of ghosts. Raleigh was no friend to Ireland: it might even be argued that he was its worst enemy because he introduced the potato; but he is remembered while there is little thought of the race that loved it so well. Still, you cannot help thinking of them when you follow their sad and noble river. You could imagine that the depths of the Black Water were still

ST MARY'S, YOUGHAL

WAS originally a Franciscan abbey, founded early in the thirteenth century. The greater part has been carefully restored, but the font, screen, and carved oak pulpit are untouched, and each is remarkable for its ancient workmanship. The part of the church in which they stand probably appears the same as it has done for centuries.

haunted by the ghosts of the leaves that whispered above it when it ran dark below the forest of Desmond, for it is a wide river of shadows. Beyond doubt, it is haunted by the thought of the Geraldines: you will remember them at woody Dromana and calm Temple Michael and every turn of the shore. At Temple Michael was their burial-place. It is recorded that one of them was buried away from it, at Ardmore on the Waterford side, after fighting in vain, but could not repose there, and haunted the opposite bank at midnight for seven years, calling "Garoult arointha!" "Ferry Gerald over the river!" till some faithful clansmen of his brought his body across by stealth in the dark. This tale will remind you that the Black Water was a boundary river. Though the Geraldines soon acquired much of Waterford county, they did not rule there any more than did the Butlers in Wexford.

Torna the Druid prophesied (it is said) that a wind from the south-west would fell the great tree that covered all Ireland. This has been interpreted as a warning that the Fenians would land in the south-west and conquer. Whether they did or not, whether they ever landed at all or never existed, certain it is that the Danes and the Normans came

up from the south-east like a devastating wind. That was Ireland's enticing and vulnerable shore: Agricola intended to bring his legions there, in the days when he marched up the Cornish coast and had dreams of expanding the Empire of Rome. So the south-eastern corner of Ireland—the counties of Wexford and Waterford—through attracting many invaders became foreign. The more daring adventurers marched inland; the wiser ones were content. For which reasons these counties became notably wise, and were at all times aloof.

The Danes founded Waterford City at the head of an inlet that had been called the Haven of the Sun till they came, and had been afterwards known as the Glen of Lamentation, because of the mourning that followed the many battles with them. They called their new citadel Vedr-fiord, because it was set beneath the point where the waters of the Suir and the Barrow united; and when three hundred years later the Normans arrived and gave them cause to lament in their turn, that name was preserved. Out of the five cities held by the Danes—Dublin, Cork, Limerick, Wexford, and Waterford—this was the one that kept their character most. "Intacta manet Waterfordia"

MOUNT MELLERAY

WHICH was founded in 1830 by Cistercian monks expelled from France. Having been granted a tract of wild mountain land, by the late Sir Richard Keane of Cappoquin, they built a monastery, and by the work of their own hands transformed the brown stony waste into the well-wooded, cultivated land that now supplies all their material wants. In addition, they have built two well-equipped schools, and altogether have set a bright example of what can be done by patient labour.

was inscribed on its arms, and that motto was always justified. Cromwell besieged it in vain, and it would not admit the Royalist troops: it stood alone, not to be coerced or entangled in the wars of its neighbours. To this day it is a prosperous town, with wide and clean streets and an air of thrifty and sober independence.

It was not possible for the county to keep as intact as its capital did; yet like Wexford, it had a life of its own. Unlike Wexford, it was not thickly populated, and was long held by Norman houses; indeed even now its chief owners, the Beresfords, though they are derived from an ancestor who settled in Ulster when that province was planted by James I., represent the Le Poers. This county was fit for stately homes, being well-wooded and well-watered and fertile; even its mountains will repay cultivation, as was proved by the Trappist monks of Mount Melleray when they turned a bare hillside into rich fields. So the adventurers who found it first kept it as long as they could. For which reason, and because the peasants were as tough and intractable as their neighbours of Wexford, the masterful Geraldines failed on this side of their river. But they were at home in the pleasant county of Cork.

There is a solitary ivied tower standing by a small river, near Buttevant, in a deserted and bare glen. This is all that is left of their splendid fortress, Kilcolman. When they fell, it was granted to Spenser, with three thousand acres around it, on condition that he should reside in it and should allow no Irish to be on his lands. Here he wrote the *Fœrie Queene*, not without thinking of them and of their knightly deeds in their haunted forest; and here he came under the spell of the glamour of Ireland. More than that, he came under the spell of Irish ill-luck; for the castle was burnt in the rising of 1598, and he was driven out of the country, broken-hearted. Nor were his descendants immune; William Spenser, his grandson, was evicted and transplanted to Connaught as one of the Irish Nation, thus incurring the doom which the poet had recommended as fit for all the barbarous Irish. Since which time the Spensers have vanished as utterly from ruined Kilcolman as have the Geraldines and the tall woods that once roofed the valley with leaves.

Buttevant is said to have been named from a Norman war-cry "Push forward" "Boutez en avant"; and there are many other such traces of that people in these parts; but though they pre-

THE MONKS OF MOUNT MELLERAY

ARE of the Trappist order, one of great austerity. They rise every morning at 2 A.M., maintain perpetual silence, live entirely upon vegetable diet, and by their labour in the fields supply their own wants, and gain sufficient to entertain strangers hospitably.

vailed for a time, they could not eradicate the clans they subdued, for this was a country very dear to the Irish. It is probable that the people of Cork County had even then the character recognised now; for it is plain that they attracted their conquerors, and subdued them in turn, not by the sword, but with an irresistible kindness. Even Edmund Spenser, who, when he was not lost in gentle dreams, was evincing a peculiar ferocity which is remembered still by men who were never soothed by his verses, even he married one of their girls, and before and after his time many another foreigner came and saw and was conquered. So Cork, in spite of having enticed Danish and Norman and Spanish and French and English settlers, remained immutably Irish; and now though many of its inhabitants have dark foreign faces, and more have Cromwellian names, yet all of them speak with a tender brogue.

Here on every hand you find tenderness and brightness and "blarney." It is related that the word blarney was coined by Queen Bess. The Lord of Blarney Castle, a MacCarthy, so often beguiled her with amiable messages (it is said) that at length she exclaimed "that is all Blarney, and means nothing." Now, though the legend that she

could talk Irish, having learnt it from her mother, Anne Boleyn, and discoursed in that tongue with Grace O'Malley, is probably false, still her descent from the Butlers entitled her to speak with authority; and it must be admitted that if she said this she was not far wrong. Cork blarney does not mean very much, beyond a pleasant desire to please: it is best explained by other words popular here, such as wheedling, deludthering, soothering. None of these denote any culpable guile. The people of Cork hold with Saint Augustine that an ounce of honey attracts more flies than a gallon of vinegar. Their light-heartedness does not seem to be Irish: you will find it nowhere else in this country, nor will you unearth any record that it ever was shown elsewhere in the past; it resembles the gaiety of France, and may be in part due to a French strain, but it seems natural here. The sunny and mild climate of the Land of many Waters (as an old Annalist called it) and the feminine loveliness of its undulating meadows accord with the nature ascribed to all who are born within sound of the Bells of Shandon.

The city earned its name "Rebel Cork" in the days when it supported Perkin Warbeck. It was independent and mercantile then, and always in

THE RIVER LEE

THE church spire in the distance is that of Shandon.

THE BELLS OF SHANDON

"With deep affection
And recollection
I often think of
Those Shandon bells,
Whose sounds so wild would,
In the days of childhood,
Fling round my cradle
Their magic spells—
On this I ponder,
Where'er I wander,
And thus grow fonder,
Sweet Cork, of thee;
With thy bells of Shandon
That sound so grand on
The pleasant waters
Of the River Lee."

Rev. FRANCIS MAHONY.

arms against its "evil neighbours, the Irish outlaws"; but its long isolation ended when the ramparts were finally battered by Marlborough. If it is still Rebel Cork, that is due to the ultimate success of those neighbours, and to the fact that a warlike attitude pleases some of those Provencals of Ireland. It has no martial look, but rather a happy-go-lucky air of content. Yet if you turn into its by-ways, you will find misery and destitution. So, too, when you visit the Cove of Cork, that wide Haven of the Sun, you will be reminded of pleasure by the innocent sails of yachts. But it is also frequented by the emigrant ships. Alas, the emigrant ships! These have made it resemble that other Glen of Lamentation: its hilly shores have echoed the loud grief of a multitude. It would have been better for those exiles if they could have looked back for the last time on a scene less delightful; here they could not but feel how rich and kind a land they were leaving.

Limerick City, unlike Cork, has retained its martial appearance. There are great solid towers and sheer ramparts; but these are no longer defended, and are as obsolete as the vacant warehouses that tell of a forgotten prosperity. You feel that this is a place blighted in its prime by some strange mis-

fortune; it is so silent and fallen that you could imagine it under a curse. Yet for a long time it ranked with Galway, it was as proud and as flourishing, and had a much older claim to respect, since it had been famous as a seat of the Danes. Like them, its people were always seafaring and mercantile and bellicose, till it was broken by its last siege in the days of William of Orange. After that time, it was gradually deserted; its men found their way to the foreign Brigades and later to America. Now, though that first impression is modified when you are familiar with the city, though you find that it has more commerce and life than you thought, these appear out of proportion, as when you see a small household live quietly in part of an ancient castle.

Limerick was influenced greatly by the Geraldines, for they were enthroned near it in Desmond Castle at Adare, on the shore of the lordly and impetuous Shannon. That was a royal house in a royal country: Kincora, the Palace at the Head of the Weir, once stood by the Shannon above it, and so did Castle Connell, the seat of the Kings of Thomond. Now Castle Connell is ruined, and of Kincora nothing is left save a grassy mound near Killaloe, and Desmond Castle is a green wreck

THE SHANNON

The largest river in the three kingdoms is not noted for its scenery, but its great volume, described as "a wide waste of waters," has many points of interest; in some places, as at Lough Derg, it is thirteen miles across. The country through which it passes is very flat as far as Killaloe, where this sketch was made; after this the river becomes narrower, and the banks rise higher.

among others, the remnants of monasteries that the Geraldines founded. Near all their great homes they built monasteries; it was their boast that they had been the chief patrons of the friars and monks, and in this, though they were but following the custom of Normandy, they agreed with the Irish one. This form of munificence was one of the things that made them congenial. You will not find that they were considered foreigners, as their rivals were always, and they were most Irish when they lived in the West, for they put off the trammels of alien life when they were here at Adare, or at further Castleisland above monastic Killarney.

Limerick County resembles Tipperary and Clare in its boldness; but its moors are more often cloven by valleys. Time was when it was sheltered by the Dark Wood, the forest in which the hunted Irish lay hidden during the fine months, only sallying out of it when the misery of the winter impelled them to a mad desperation,—they could not rest under the naked and moaning boughs. Now, though the forest was felled by the conquerors in Elizabeth's time, many of the hollows have grown woody again. And the men of this county have much in common with those of Clare and Tipperary, though they are of more mingled blood. The

Germans who were brought to this island from the Palatinate, under Queen Anne, took a firmer hold here than anywhere else; and the descendants of the three thousand emigrants to whom lands in Limerick were given then are apart still and known as the Palatines. Besides these there were many Cromwellian settlers, for this was one of the parts kept by the soldiers. So the people have a robust and dogged strain; but their kinship with the natives of Cork has ensured a hilarity that is not to be found in Tipperary or Clare. Is it not celebrated in the old ballad "Garryowen na Gloria"?

When you go westward to the mountains you enter the oldest part of Old Ireland. The Highlands of Donegal are ancient enough, since there the folk seem to have altered so little since the days when Clan Connell flourished, and so is Connemara, though there the spirit that lingers still in the mountains belongs to a later time of misfortune; but Kerry appertains to a period of which nothing is known. In Killarney you will remember the monks; but that fortunate place is only an outlying nook of waters and trees and flowers. A dark river, fighting its way along a trough of the mountains on the brink of the Highlands, widens into pools

KINCORA

WITH its surroundings, is perhaps the most beautiful place on the Shannon. It is also of great historic and romantic interest. The mound, marked by trees across the water, is the site of Brian Boru's stronghold.

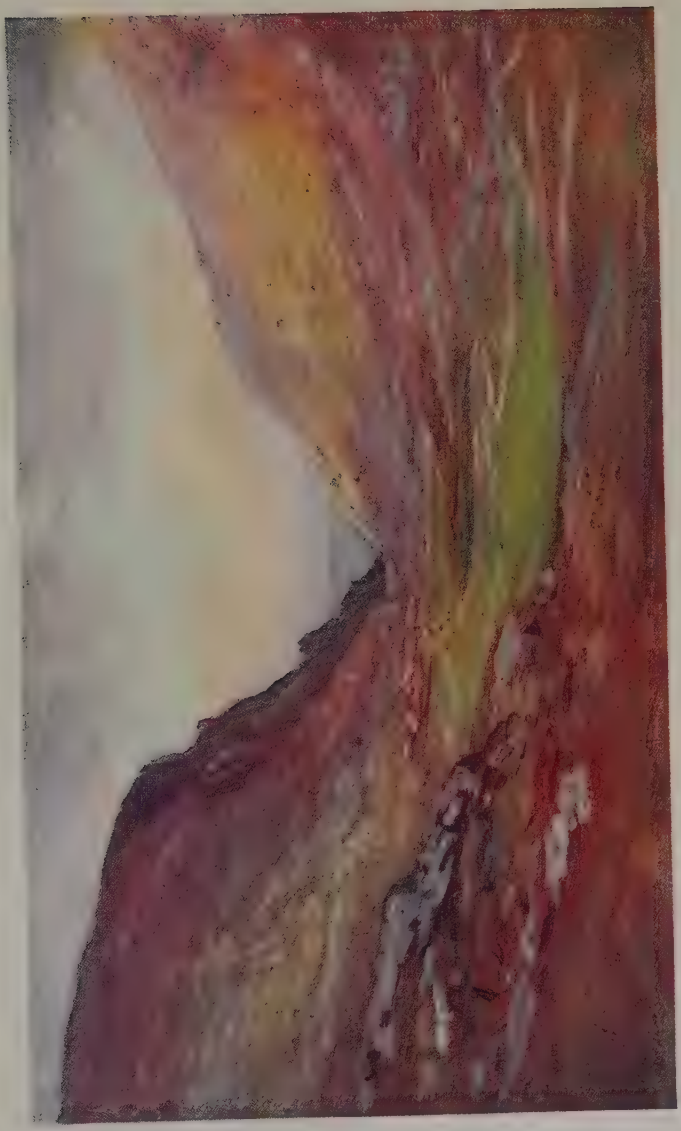
above hollows and then into a small lake, and next into a larger one, and afterwards is constricted again till it reaches the ocean. Its two wide and sunlit expanses are now called the Lakes of Killarney. Because it reposes in them, they tell of rest amid toil and forgetfulness amid trouble. Their delicate light is the more welcome because it is contrasted with the gloom of the mountains. The nook has a restful and calm prettiness. This is such a place as a man would choose when abandoning a world he found too hard and seeking oblivion. So it was a favourite haunt of monks; but it does not suggest the grave silence of hermits as Glendalough does: it reminds you of the happiness found in scholarly cloisters and of peaceful and ordered lives. Though Innisfallen, the island where the Annals were written, is now a place of trees, and the cloisters of Muckross are left to the dead, the nook still is monastic. It is true that you will come on the hulk of a castle once held by the O'Donoghues of the Lakes, and will find pleasant spots vulgarised by such names as O'Sullivan's Punchbowl, and if you are foolish enough to allow the boatmen to plague you with stories, most of which have been made for English consumption, you will hear many absurd legends of impossible

chiefs, and very little about the monks; but if you dwell on these things, you will fail to appreciate the charm of the place. You will not feel it unless you are persuaded here for a little that all the tragedies and cares of the world are the things of a dream.

But this spot, which might be called, as part of it is, the Glen of Good Fortune, is excepted from the mournful and wild Kingdom of Kerry. It is a spot of light in the darkness. Behind its rich woods stand bare heights, Mangerton, Carrantual, and Cromaglen, and just above it that changing river is darkened by the Gap of Dunloe. If you should ascend that river to its neighbouring source, you would find yourself under Cruacha Dhu, the Black Reeks, and in the heart of a wilderness where the gloom is primeval. And the people of the Kingdom of Kerry, the few representatives of its desperate clans, have in their nature much that is primitive. If you can get to know them at all (and that is not easy) you will feel that the first wandering men who found their westward course limited on this brink of the world must have resembled them. They have never been understood by their neighbours, and in consequence they have seldom been trusted. Perhaps the distrust arose partly because

THE HEAD OF THE GAP OF DUNLOE

THE valley is famous for its echoes. The report of a gun is loudly repeated, and the echo, which passes from hill to hill, ends in a grumble like giants quarrelling.

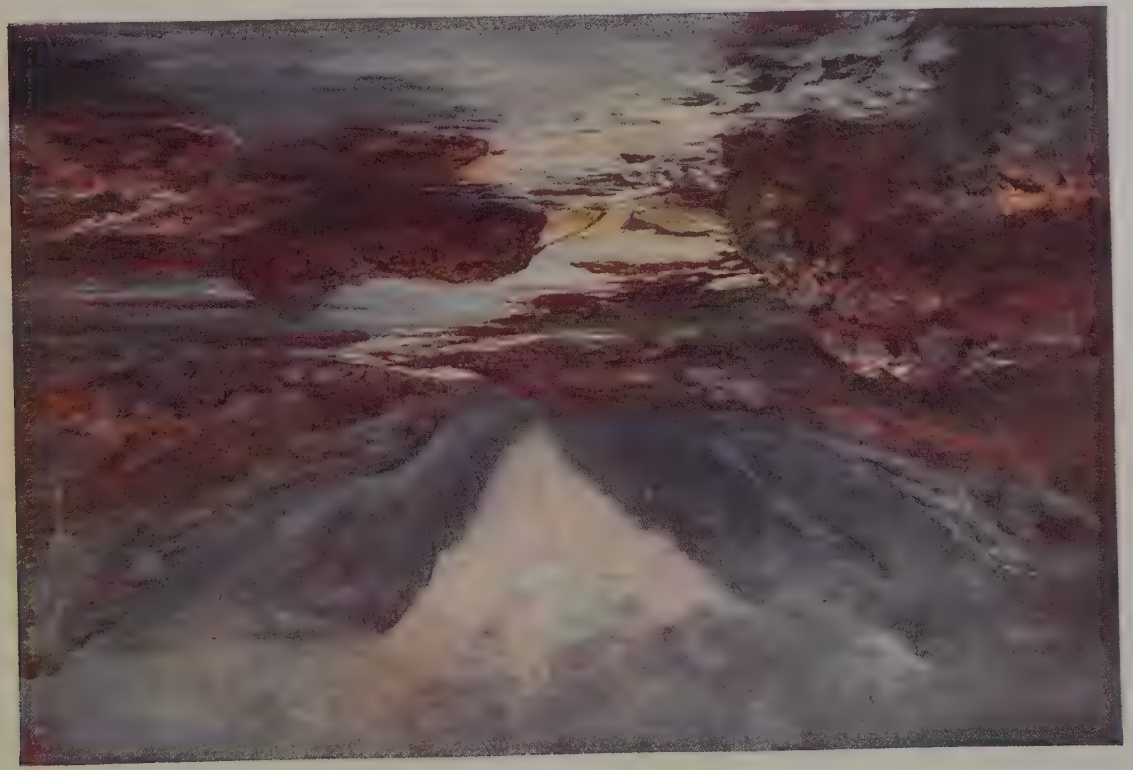


they were suspicious. So were the primeval men: one can imagine them dark and silent and only gregarious because they were afraid. There is no doubt that the world was born old. And along these shores you will find in mature people the first solemnity of infants.

This is a land less shadowed by heights than Connemara, less stern than Donegal. It has more numerous green and happy recesses than either; for if you follow its loud shore, you will come on many such glades as Glengariff, Parknasilla, and Caragh; but these, like Killarney, derive most of their charm from the lonely and dim places behind them. Donegal and Connemara are grim; but in these Highlands, scourged though they are by tempests and thrilled by the perpetual thunder of the heavy waves, you find the first peace that is so akin to the last peace of despair.

THE GAP OF DUNLOE

KILLARNEY owes its world-wide reputation as much to the variety as to the beauty of its scenery. We find here a combination of all kinds, wonderfully contrasting with each other—from the wildest rugged mountain to the gentlest sylvan glade, from the swift river to the placid lake bordered with foliage-covered hills: to all these beauties the Gap of Dunloe is the gate.



THE ISLANDS OF IRELAND

THE EAGLE'S NEST

THIS is one of the best known hills in Killarney, and though not very high, its proximity to "The Long Range" or river from which it rises perpendicularly, makes it a striking object. Its top is bare, and on the inaccessible side grey eagles still have their eyries. This side also throws back a remarkable echo; it is repeated on Torc Mountain opposite, and in calm weather re-echoed again and again at an apparently great distance.

CHAPTER VIII

THE ISLANDS OF IRELAND

THOUGH the Geraldines were strong in their day among the mountains of Kerry, they did not attempt to control the neighbouring islands; neither did any other Normans extend their dominions beyond the brink of the sea. For this reason the many islands within sight of the cliffs of the North and the West remained peculiarly Irish. There was one exception, Rathlin above Antrim; but this was always a debatable land. Even in 1612 Scotland still claimed it. There the Bissetts took up their abode; but by passing from them to the MacDonnells it again became Celtic, and it suffered accordingly, for it beheld many such scenes as that massacre when old Sorley Boy wept aloud and raved like a madman on the neighbouring cliffs, while across the narrow water his wife and his children were put to the sword. Clare Island and

Achill knew fire and sword also; but that was because they were Irish. In them, as in the Islands of Aran and in those beside Kerry, the Celts remained lords. This was no doubt due in part to the fact that nobody else wanted them. Even Cromwell, though he decreed that all the islands should be cleared of the Irish, did not try to give them away. And now, though in later times there was a futile attempt to colonise Achill, they are all left in the hands of the one race eccentric enough to find pleasure in them.

This suited all; for the Irish Celt was by nature a lover of islands. Most people would think that Ireland itself was solitary and secluded enough; but that view was not held by the Irish, for there are innumerable remnants of castles and churches and abbeys to be found in the lakes. Of course, some of these were built there because the water provided a natural moat. Such a one, for instance, was Ross Castle, the O'Donoghues' hold in Lough Leane at Killarney. This fortress relied so much on the water around it that there was an old prophecy that it would never be taken till ships of war were afloat on Lough Leane. That encouraging prediction was justified by the castle's immunity during many campaigns, and by its final

KILLARNEY

THE Upper Lake from the tunnel. The mountains in the right are Macgillicuddy's Reeks, the highest in Ireland.

disaster when the Puritans under Ludlow and Broghill besieged it, for they were compelled to bring boats over the mountains from Bantry. Thus the prophecy proved fatal at last, for the garrison, believing in it, recognised that the hour of doom had struck after all, and surrendered at once. Another such hold was Ballinahinch, the Castle of the Island, now only a ruin in the midst of Lough Corrib, but for many a year the proud home of the ferocious O'Flaherties.

It was natural that men should enjoy the protection of water in times when every chief was accustomed to find pastime in midnight raids, or when the English were pursuing the sport of hunting the Irish Wolves; and even the monks could not overlook that advantage, since few of their neighbours would have been slow to burn a church or an abbey if it had happened to be under the patronage of one they disliked; but apart from this, the Celts loved the visible separation of islands. A little island of trees in the heart of a quiet lake hidden by mountains—such was the home they desired. There they could live secluded in the core of seclusion, and isolated from all the isolation of Ireland.

Those who dwelt on the islands of the savage

Atlantic enjoyed in addition to a greater security the delight of the contrast afforded by the vain and morose toil of the breakers. When Columbkille made rocky Iona "a nest of singing-birds," it was his joy to think that the music of their worship would rise over the tumult of the wind and the surf, and to imagine that sailors, hearing that melody of peace while they struggled in the grip of a storm, would dream that they listened to the voices of angels. In the same spirit, the primitive monks who were voluntary captives on Aran or Skellig-Michael or smaller rocks, found that the outer rage uplifted their silent and penitential joy. They dedicated the Great Skellig Island to St Michael because they believed that it was his task to restrain the Powers of Darkness; and they loved it the more because its barbarous rim protected a deep hollow of turf. Down in that green cup they formed a Way of the Cross; and if you visit their refuge now, you will see the Stone of Pain and the Rock of the Woman's Wail and the rest where they knelt, when in imagination they followed the path leading to Calvary; and aloft in the wind-beaten cliffs, between the turf and the surf, you will find their separated cells.

Some of these islands had military hours. On

MUCKROSS KILLARNEY

THE view directly above Torc Waterfall shows the middle and lower lake with the peninsula that divides them. The tradition is, that before sunrise on May-day morning, once in seven years, the O'Donoghue rises out of the bosom of the lake, riding on a white horse shod with silver. Fairies hover before him, and knights ride behind in warlike state, and, as he approaches the ruins of his castle, it assumes all its former magnificence.

Tory Island (so it is said) the Nemedians and the Fomorians from Africa fought, in prehistorical times, a murderous battle beside the Tower of Conning. From Clare Island by Mayo, Grace O'Malley, the Sea-Queen, who, sailing to England, greeted Elizabeth on equal terms, dominated all Connemara. Skellig-Michael was known to the Danes, and Valencia, the parish nearest to America, was frequented and re-christened by Spaniards. In later times some of them were linked with the names of Paul Jones and Fineen O'Driscoll the Rover. They were for a long time the nests of pirates and wreckers, places of ill-omen to ships; but now they are all peaceful again.

The islands are a country apart. If you go to the Aran Islands, you will discover that the people of Arranmore, Inishmaan, and Inishere are aloof. Theirs is a primitive Christianity, little concerned with later dogmas or pomp; they have laws of their own, and those who infringe them are banished to Ireland; they are mournful and taciturn, and full of beliefs older than Dun Aengus, the vast primeval fortification on Arranmore. The people of the Island of Towers, Tory Island, were, till quite recent days, accustomed to choose a king of their own to whom they all rendered an implicit

obedience. Even now most of the islanders go fishing in coracles, long narrow punts, framed of wicker and covered with tarpaulin or skins. It is probable that in such vessels as these the primitive Celts defied the storms.

The many islands in the lakes had, of course, no such separate population. The chiefs who held castles on them enjoyed the seclusion the more because it only endured as long as they liked; they could be hospitable there, or participate in the battles and the feasts of their neighbours. The monks, who built churches on them and little round beehive cells in which they tasted the pleasure of solitude while retaining the other delight of sympathetic companionship, were but agreeably sundered from the life on the shores. They went there to find peace and security in a world of alarms. And now that the castles are all in ruins, the green spots they once overshadowed are as calm as the others that hold empty cells and wrecked churches that are left to the dead. Even to-day some of these islands are places of burial. Such a one is Devenish in Lough Erne, and a nook on the bank of the lake is still called the Port of Lamentation, in memory of the funerals that left it, accompanied by the wild keening of women, when the

MOONLIGHT ON MUCKROSS

It is stated Boucicault laid one of the principal scenes of "The Colleen Bawn" at this spot; the light in the window of the cottage suggesting the love signal across the lake. Another scene of "The Colleen Bawn" is laid about half a mile across the water.

dead were borne over the water to that island of rest.

You will have observed that this country is an island of islands. Just as in early days it was held by many small nations mutually hostile, so now, after all the violent interventions and the compulsory removals, each county has a separate life. In each of them there are to be seen distinctions of character; but none the less all are Irish. A man whose fathers have lived from time immemorial among reverberating cliffs and condemned to dare the rough Atlantic in coracles, cannot altogether resemble one derived from a family that has been set in a hushed wilderness of bogs. The chances of fortune should be also remembered: the subjected and colonised English Pale was compelled to differ from intact Donegal. Yet though they were apart, so was their country. The men of the bogs and the mountains and of the Pale and Tir-Connell have all been subjected by the witchcraft of Ireland.

THE MEETING OF THE WATERS
KILLARNEY

THE GENTLEMEN OF IRELAND

CHAPTER IX

THE GENTLEMEN OF IRELAND

Now, having dwelt for a little on the nature of Ireland, let us consider the common nature of Irishmen. This can best be done by dividing them into two classes, the Gentry and Peasantry, and studying each. Perhaps this is an old-fashioned division; but in Ireland we are old-fashioned people. Again you might contend that it overlooks the well-to-do farmers and the tradesmen; but these are of a connecting class—you will find names that were once wholly aloof from commerce of any kind now over shops or associated with farms—so we can leave them to decide for themselves to which of the other two they belong. One word more, this division has nothing to do with pedigree; for apart from the universality of royal extraction, there have been in Ireland so many changes of fortune that the inhabitants of

thatched cabins have sometimes as honourable and ascertained a descent as their masters. By the gentlemen I mean the landlords.

It is worth while to study this class, because there is good reason to hold that it will soon be extinct. Whether that will prove a very great advantage to Ireland is (I venture to think) open to doubt; but that point cannot be discussed without continuing those political wrangles of which we have heard more than enough. To avoid these, I mean to confine myself mainly to the gentlemen and the peasants of yesterday. This plan has the further advantage that it will enable us to think of those classes in their prime, for now —to tell the truth—both have degenerated, one under English influence and the other under American, and both are exhausted. But in the recent past, say in the second half of the eighteenth century and in the beginning of the nineteenth, both flourished and both were still national.

There may be need to remind you that the landlords are not aliens. Many have old Irish names, and those who have not can in nearly every case prove a strain of Celtic descent. Formerly they were divided by their creeds, though even in

O'SULLIVAN'S PUNCHBOWL

the worst days of the Penal Laws many Catholics owed their estates to the loyalty of Protestant friends, and they were once sundered too as Old Irish or English of Ireland or Cromwellians; but for many a day they have been united by danger. Now they are in every way as Irish as any Nationalist orator is, and they are as proud of the fact. Their different stocks have all been moulded by Ireland. "Lord!" wrote Edmund Spenser, "how quickly doth that country alter men's natures!"

That quick alteration, whether it was an improvement or not, left the English of Ireland hard to distinguish from the descendants of its earlier lords. There was a time when they recognised a division. Thus Dean Swift wrote to Pope that there was "a great distinction between the English gentry of Ireland and the savage Old Irish." Meanwhile the savage Old Irish looked on the others as upstarts and thieves. You may remember Arthur Young's story of how an O'Hara of Annaghmore went with Lord Kingsborough and other men of English descent, one of whom, named Sandford, could boast that his mother was an O'Brien, to visit The MacDermot of Coolavin, and how that magnate received them with a calm

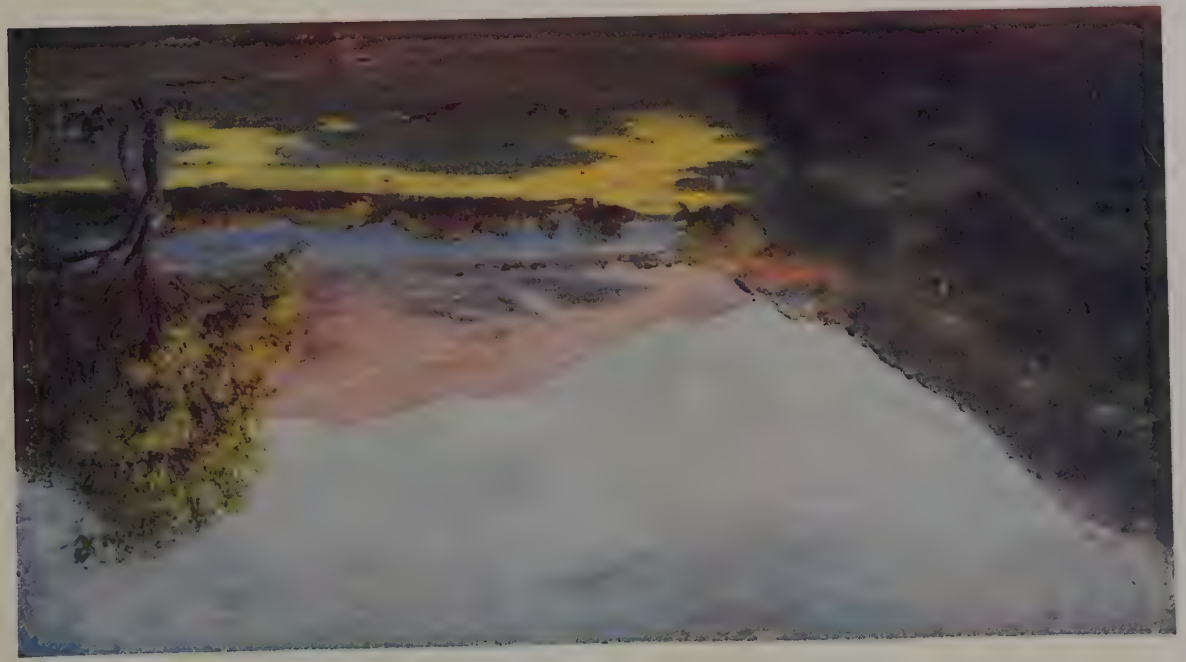
discrimination, saying, "O'Hara, you are welcome; Sandford, I am glad to see your mother's son; as for the rest of you, come in as you can." But, though the separation was made more marked by the fact that while many of the Old Irish were Catholics most of the others were not, a foreigner could have easily missed seeing it. Look at the names of the most redoubtable duellists, or of the families most renowned for a whimsical and profuse hospitality, and you will find both races represented alike. They were to all intents one, as their children are now, and so they should be studied together.

The saints of Ireland were skilled in the invocation of curses; and in this they have always been rivalled by the peasants, as many traditions of Irish families show, and as you will probably find if you turn a deaf ear to a beggar. One of the imprecations most commonly employed, in the old days, by those to whom help was refused was "Green grow the grass before your door!" It was every man's aim to keep open house and an open heart; and this is one of the reasons why that curse has since come upon so many homes in which it was never merited.

In the old days, the gentlemen of Ireland were

GLENA MOUNTAIN, FROM TORC COTTAGE

THE lake is the Middle or Muckross Lake, Killarney. The sketch was made at 5 a.m.



mainly renowned for three things, hospitality and feasting and duelling. The first involved the second, and that was in turn one of the chief causes of the third. You will not understand the old prevalence of duels unless you bear in mind that those meetings were often friendly. They were regulated by laws made in the year 1777 at Clonmel in Tipperary by men representing that county and Galway and Roscommon and Sligo and Mayo. Note that four of these counties belonged to the Irish Pale. These laws were known as the Galway Code of the Duel. Having enacted that a blow is strictly prohibited under any circumstances amongst gentlemen, they proceeded to indicate how disputes should be settled in an orderly way with pistols or swords. "No dumb-shooting or firing in the air is admissible in any case," they decided, for such conduct was "children's play." They showed how a man should kill his best friend without a trace of unkindness for any reason or none. Many of these conflicts were caused, not by mutual hate, but by a common love of danger. There is a good deal to be said for duelling as a form of sport; it must have been more exciting and dangerous than hunting big game, nor did it necessitate journeys to India or Africa; it had a moral influence, for it made men

feel the value of a clear eye and a steady hand; above all, it inculcated civility and the importance of an accurate tongue. At the same time, it had some disadvantages. If a man was very proud of his swordsmanship or his knack with a pistol, he might become a public nuisance, a bully or fire-eater.

Such a one was Hyacinth O'Rorke of Kilvarney. Of him it is told that he was accustomed to take his walks abroad with a pistol in one hand and a horsewhip in the other. When we think of him it is a comfort to know that he met his deserts. After long years of glory, he happened to thrash an importunate shopkeeper, and for some time there could be found no magistrate courageous enough to issue a warrant against him; but at length one, a man of peace, Philip Caoch Perceval of Temple House, dared to do it, and was speedily thrashed. On this, a duel was fought in the rath of Liscat near Achonry. O'Rorke was entitled to keep the advantage of having the rising sun behind him, but he surrendered it because Perceval's eyes were weak. Then at fourteen paces he fired and missed. "Beg your life, sir," said Blind Philip. "Never! fire away, you blind rascal!" said Hyacinth; and the next moment he was shot

THE FOOT OF MANGERTON

GIVES a good idea of the way mountain roads often end in stepping-stones over a stream, which sometimes becomes a torrent impassable for cars. The path on the far side of such a stream frequently leads to some such lonely dwelling, as is shown in the picture, "A Home in Achill."

through the head. Whereupon the peasantry of Sligo and Leitrim mourned for him because he was of the Old Irish and because his behaviour had made him a popular hero.

By-the-by, how excellent a name is Hyacinth O'Rorke! In those days, the gentlemen loved such nomenclature. Do not names like Sir Teague O'Regan, Bartholomew Blake, Sir Hercules Langrishe, and Cornelius O'Callaghan, ring gallantly? They must have been borne with a proud and cheerful defiance; no weakling could ever have done justice to them. Nor were the houses less magnificently named. To this day you will find every county in Ireland full of Castles and Abbeys, and if you pause to inspect them, you will often see nothing more than an old squat white house in a weedy and rough park, and will learn that the title is due to the fact that there is a ruined tower somewhere in the grounds or to a legend that a monastery stood in the neighbourhood.

But, to return to the matter of duelling, you must not think that Hyacinth O'Rorke's case was typical. The usual spirit was better shown by Jack Taafe of Camphill near Ballysadare, who when he went out of doors always bestrode a tail-

less horse, and was accompanied by a servant of his seated on a saddle of straw. By this custom, he could often provoke a stranger to smile. That was all he required; for then the next morning would see him squinting along the barrel of his pistol or smiling in turn, rapier in hand. You will observe that he was not misanthropic nor quarrelsome; he was merely resolved to avoid a monotonous life. Of course, there were duels with a purpose, as when Lord Mount Garrett and his sons, Somerset Butler and Pierce Butler, challenged eight barristers who were employed by an opponent in a troublesome lawsuit, or as when during the election of 1808 one candidate for Wexford, John Alcock, killed the other, John Colclough of Tintern, or as when there was some real grievance. But in a great many encounters the only purpose was pleasure. A good instance of this is to be found in an old book called *Irish Varieties.*

The author relates how George Mathew of Thomastown and a friend of his named MacNamara fought two English champions, Major Pack and Captain Creed, who had come to Ireland to pick a quarrel with them. "To work the four champions fell," he writes, "with the same composure as if it were only a fencing match with foils. Creed first

LOUGH GARAGARRY

THIS lough, which is situated on the lower slope of Mangerton Mountain, Killarney, forms the end of the wild Glen na Cloghereen. The lough is sometimes called "O'Donoghue's Ink Bottle," from the dark colour of its waters.

went down; upon which Pack exclaimed 'Ah, poor Creed, are you gone?' 'Yes,' said Mathew very composedly, 'and you shall instantly pack after him'; at the same time making a home-thrust quite through his body. When the Englishmen came to themselves, Pack in a feeble voice said to his friend, 'I think we are conquerors, for we have kept the field of battle.' For a long time their lives were despaired of; but to the astonishment of everyone, they both recovered. Mr Mathew and his friend attended them daily; and a close intimacy afterwards ensued, as they found them men of probity and of the best dispositions."

Here is an incident worthy of Dumas, and indeed no other writer could have done justice to that time. Faithful descriptions are to be found in *Castle Rackrent* and in a few chapters of Lever's novels; but none of these are complete. Still, the English belief that they are exaggerated is a mistake; it would be easy to cap their wildest stories with true ones. The more you learn of those days from family traditions or old correspondence, the more you are inclined to exclaim "a mad world, my masters!" Yet in that noble madness there was a method. And you must not fall into the opposite mistake of imagining that

everyone shared it. Take Hyacinth O'Rorke's case, for instance, and you will observe that most of his neighbours were only too peaceful. So also there is reason to think that quite a number of men usually went to bed sober. But it was not the sober men nor the quiet ones who became famous.

"Had you any assistance in drinking that dozen of claret?" was the question in a favourite story, and the answer was "Yes, sir, I had the assistance of a bottle of brandy." The man who could make such a reply would have been honoured; but if one had been found grossly intoxicated after drinking a bottle or two of honest wine he would have been scorned. Sobriety was held in esteem, after a fashion. The man who was most respected was he who could drink the most wine without being the worse for it, he who remained at the table when all his companions were under it. His was a tested sobriety, not a fugitive and cloistered virtue. Such an ambition was disastrous to many; but we should extenuate their fall by reflecting that they were doing their best, and would have been delighted to find themselves sober at dawn.

The drinking sprang from the hospitality. Since a man would have been disgraced if his

CATHEDRAL CLIFFS, ACHILL

THE Cathedral Cliffs are only accessible when the tide is out. They are worn into arches and caves by the action of the water, which has given them a remarkable resemblance to Gothic architecture. On the shaded side they look sombre and impressive, but when the sun shines there are varied and brilliant colours on the lichen rocks.

guests had not found enough to eat and drink, he was apt to see that they had too much. That from the point of view of a guest was a fault on the right side. As for the hospitality, there were many reasons for that: there were no comfortable inns by the roads, and it would have been cruel to leave a stranger to share the different life of the few inn-keeping peasants; the spirit of the times was in every way antiquated—it might be called mediæval—and the old methods of travelling and of welcoming travellers therefore survived; above all, the country itself had such a lonely look that people were driven to foregather. In studying Irishmen, you should always remember that theirs is the saddest and kindest country on earth. By dwelling in it, they were made sad and kind.

The kindness, of course, is proverbial; but it must be admitted that in those times it was withheld from the men of one calling, the bailiffs. These were by virtue of their avocation considered outside the pale of humanity. In Connemara there is an old house from which you will be shown a miniature island called the Bailiff's Rock. This is covered by the sea when the tide is in. The owners of that house will tell you how a bailiff, who had taken possession of the property, was

lured to that island by an ancestor of theirs, to take possession of it, and was left on it till he was drowned by the in-coming tide. Such killing was no murder in Galway, and this was regarded as a practical joke. This was, I fancy, an exceptional instance of humour; but it was quite common to have a bailiff beaten or ducked or forced to swallow his writ. Even the Sheriffs were not always on the side of the Law. I know another family that boasts of an ancestor, of whom it is told how when he was Sheriff of Galway he was handed a writ addressed to one of a party seated around his hospitable board, how he announced what it was without mentioning any name, and then read it out with a solemn deliberation, and how when he had ended he looked up and saw that he was alone, for his guests had all fled through the window.

The sadness, on the other hand, is not so recognised; and as a matter of fact, it was not often to be seen on the surface then, though with good reason there is more of it visible now. None the less, melancholy lies at the root of the Irish character. In those days it inspired the feasting, the fighting, and the heroic improvidence. Men fought because life was worth very little to them,

MEENAUNE CLIFFS, ACHILL

SOME of the finest in Ireland. This particular one which overhangs its base is one of the wildest, and can only be reached at very low tides. To make this sketch I was obliged to place scouts on the far side of the rock, to give notice of the advancing tide, which cuts it off. On inquiring what would happen if I were cut off, the reply was, "You would be drownded."

and revelled together because they chose to forget; they were merry because they were mournful. Sir Jonah Barrington, in a chapter called "Irish Dissipation in 1778," records how his two brothers and six of their friends, being prevented from hunting by a hard frost, locked themselves in a room where they had provided a hogshead of claret and abundance of food, and how they proceeded to close all its shutters, so that no intrusion of changing light should remind them of external affairs, and to devote themselves to drinking and eating and singing, and how they did not desist till they had exhausted their store. That obstinate feast was more than an instance of the prevalent ways; it was also a symbol. The spirit that animated Ireland's rejoicings was this,—a deliberate exclusion of care. It was expressed in the song,—

> "As in wailing, there's nought availing,
> And death unfailing will strike the blow;
> Then for that reason, and for a season,
> Let us be merry before we go."

This mood ensured many disasters. These we have seen, for the children have suffered for the sins of the fathers, or for their follies. Still, though we in our greater wisdom condemn such doings, there

is no need to be unjust. Certain it is that these men were careless landlords, who paid little attention to the prosperity or the comfort of tenants. But were they not equally careless about their own concerns? If a man gave no thought to the morrow, he would not dwell on what the future might bring to others; if he was accustomed to have his roof leaking or his window panes cracked, he would not be afflicted if his tenants should live in dilapidated cabins; if his house was overrun by dogs, he would be aware of no reason why his poor neighbours should not be allowed the society of animals too. It must be admitted that some of the rents were exorbitant; but in many cases these were fixed by the tenants, who in their recklessness and blind competition for unprofitable patches of land, crippled themselves and their children. A perfect man would refuse to accept too heavy a rent, a wise one would see that by listening to impossible promises he would damage himself; but in this world we are not all either perfect or wise. There were, of course, other cases in which the rents were deliberately raised by harsh landlords or by the agents, those professional scapegoats; and this will remind you of the worst accusation against the landlords, that many of them were absentees, who

A HOME IN ACHILL

In passing over a mountain-side in Achill, I noticed smoke apparently coming out of the ground. Thinking it was a *poteen* whisky still, I hurried up, and was much disappointed to find it instead only a habitation, out of which came five people. It looked like a hole in the ground, but on closer examination I saw it was a hollow roughly roofed over with sods. In the low wall there was a small door which answered the purpose both of a chimney and window. The people who live in this hut look after the sheep and cattle on the hills. It is some miles from the nearest village, and very lonely; the only other sign of human habitation in sight being the roofless ruin of what was once the lodge of the late Captain Boycott.

while spendthrifts abroad, left their tenants to the mercy of underlings whose business it was to extort the necessary gold.

But why were they absent? Some were prodigals who wandered from home seeking pleasure—and let those who have no fancy for pleasure or wandering blame them for that—others had very little choice. It often happened that they inherited homes built on so vast and ostentatious a scale that residence in them would have involved an outlay much greater than wandering did. Some were exiled by a natural wish to be absent from bailiffs. To-day you will find stately and desirable homes left void while their owners live out of Ireland, and you will be inclined to condemn such irrational conduct; but if you enquire how much of the rental is ever paid and what remains after dealing with mortgages and annuities, perhaps you will hesitate. Look for those eccentric proprietors, and you may find them leading lives of mad luxury on a few pounds a week in small rooms in Brighton or Bath. Again, you should remember that most of the absentees represented conquerors, and were not of the same stock or origin as their tenantry. If some Scottish Highland chief should desert his clan, or some English and Protestant

landowner representing a family settled for hundreds of years among the stationary English and Protestant rustics, should close his moderate Manor or Hall and employ his rents in Paris, there would be more scope for blame. The nation that made Ireland a province, and stocked it time and again with new masters, was responsible for most of the suffering caused by the absentees.

As for the allegation that the landlords of Ireland were ever as a class harsh or intentionally unfair to their tenants, it is false. There have at all times been men like the first Marquis of Donegal, who have by their tyranny disgraced and disgusted their own class; but these have been few. Most of the landlords have been cruelly kind. I am not saying that they were perfect; but merely that they were Irish, which is, I believe, the next best thing to be. If you want to understand them, you will have to remember that in spite of the differences of religion and origin they were essentially akin to the peasants. If an average peasant had found himself suddenly installed by some trick of fortune in a neighbouring castle, he would have exhibited the vices and virtues of an average landlord. Just as half the misfortunes of the peasants were caused by their land-hunger, their desire to obtain or retain

SEAL CAVES, ACHILL

some portion, no matter how small, of their native fields, no matter on what terms, so the landlords were crippled by clinging to their inherited estates. There was in the West an Old Irish family named MacMahon; and they, being Catholics, were threatened with forfeiture under the Penal Laws. On this, one of them, a spinster, saved their property for them by conforming to the Protestant Church. "What is an old maid worth?" said she, "it is better that an old maid's soul should go to the Devil than that the lands of the MacMahons of Clare should go to the Protestants." In that saying she expressed the affection her class had for the land that had been owned by their fathers. This made them hold when wiser men would have sold. And in this course they were influenced by the two curses of Ireland,—a blind hopefulness and a fatal content.

Foreigners, hearing a little of Irish discontent and of the wrongs of the most distressful country, are apt to begin with a radical misunderstanding. They can be pardoned if they think that this race is addicted to grumbling and whining, and that it would deserve more respect if it could practise self-help and take part of the blame of its troubles to itself, instead of assigning it all to somebody else

and demanding assistance. But the truth is that the extremity of those troubles is due to the fact that they were ignored when they might have been cured. Because the Irish landlords and peasants were content with so little, they find themselves the owners of less. Because they hoped without reason, they are left to despair.

When I said that the race was a melancholy one, I did not mean that it was dejected. If it is so now, that is due to exhaustion and the ultimate triumph of adversities that were for a long time courageously borne or cheerfully forgotten. Irish melancholy is as irrational as Irish hopefulness. The most prosperous man could then be as pleasantly mournful as the poorest, and the latter was not more firmly persuaded that some great happiness would fall to his portion. The result is the present state of affairs. As for the remnant of the landlords, their struggle seems ending in a final surrender. But before this, their last hour, a great many of them had fallen. In every county of Ireland you will see houses once famous for rejoicing now desolate and left to decay. There is no welcome now in those palaces. Green grows the grass before the doors.

A VILLAGE IN ACHILL

In the extreme west, situated a few feet above the sea level, is the village of Dookinella. It is often flooded by tide, river, and lake, and gives an impression of desolation and bare life without hope. The cabins are of the most primitive description, and the thatched roofs are weighted all round with stones as a precaution against storms. The inhabitants live on small holdings rescued from the sea, which is too wild here for fishing, and daily carry up after each tide seaweed to fertilise their farms. When seed-time is over, the men migrate to England or Scotland for the harvest, returning in the winter with their earnings, to maintain their families and pay their rents.

THE PEASANTS OF IRELAND

CHAPTER X

THE PEASANTS OF IRELAND

THE peasants of Ireland are all sure that they are descended from chiefs. Like the child who asked in a cemetery, "Where are all the bad people buried?" one is forced to enquire, Where are the descendants of the original clansmen? There is no reason to conclude that only the ruling stocks survived. But that belief is so universal among them that it affords the chief clue to their character. You will not understand them unless you think of them as if it was true. No matter how poor their remembered forefathers have been, all are convinced that at some time their families governed. Their pride is not based on the notion that all men are born equal; on the contrary, no one attaches more importance to gentle descent. In their obedient toil it is their consolation to hold that in the past their families were able to profit by the obedience of others.

This belief has the same effect when it is justified (as beyond doubt it sometimes is), and when it is not. It explains in part why the peasants of Ireland have so little in common with those of other countries.

An old-fashioned courtesy seems to me their especial characteristic. Take shelter in any hut on the mountains, and you will be greeted as if its inmates had been longing to see you. This will not be due to the fact that you seem prosperous; indeed, you would be even more graciously welcomed if you were in rags. Nor is their courtesy only exhibited when they are hosts. Once, when I was exploring the Burren of Clare, a ragged old woman seated by the wayside accosted my equally ragged driver. "Excuse me, sir," she said, "but did you happen to meet a loaf on the road?" "'Deed, then, ma'am," said he, bowing respectfully, "and I'm sorry I did not." "Who was she?" I asked him, when we had driven out of her hearing. "'Deed, then, and I don't know," said he; "'tis some poor soul that has lost her loaf and will be goin' to bed hungry to-night." On another occasion, an aged man, clad in knee-breeches and a swallow-tail coat, addressed me, as I was climbing a path in Connemara. "I am thinkin', sir," said he, "that you are Mr John

CUTTING TURF

THIS scene is characteristic of bogland in nearly all parts of Ireland. Although nothing can look more desolate than this bog, upon it really depends the existence of the small holders who live on the green patches won from the mountain side. The turf supplies the only fuel that they can get. As one of the natives said to me, "Well, there's one good thing. Although we are sometimes hungry, we are never cold." In many instances the right to cut peat is free to the cottagers, but in some cases a charge of about 10s. per annum is exacted. I was told that a man could cut as much in four days as will last his household for a year. When peat is cut it is allowed to dry for a short time, and is afterwards placed in small heaps. Finally it is stacked ready for use.

Blake." "Well, sir," said I, "you are thinking wrong." "Well, sir," he answered solemnly, "says I to myself as I saw you come up the side, that is Mr John Blake; and if 'tis not, says I to myself, 'tis a fine upsthandin' young man he is whoever he is." Now I am convinced that he knew that I was a stranger; but was not that a charming way to suggest that I should sit beside him on the low ferny wall and discuss the ways of the world?

The essence of courtesy is sympathy, expressed or implied. The Irish peasant has a wonderful sympathy even for inanimate things. One of the poetic riddles in which they delight has been translated thus—

> "From house to house it goes,
> A wanderer small and slight,
> And whether it rains or snows,
> It sleeps outside in the night."

The answer to that is a footpath. Hear one of them talk of his domesticated pig, and you will observe a similar fellow-feeling. "The pig, the craythur," will never be mentioned without a hint of affectionate pity. This is one of the reasons why those instructed and respectable animals are not excluded from the warmth of the fire. They and the poultry are as welcome companions as cats and dogs are in

England. Since they often constitute the whole wealth of their proud owners, it is the more natural that they should be kept in sight and protected with a constant attention.

A foreigner, seeing a cabin built of mud or of roughly piled stones, and noting that there is a hole in the thatch instead of a chimney, and miniature windows or none, and a floor of clay, and an atmosphere pungent with the smoke of the turf on the hearth, can easily think that there is no comfort to be found in that shed. If, when his eyes are accustomed to the smoke and the dimness, he observes ragged children sharing that refuge with poultry and a litter of pigs, he will be sorry for them. The author of the "Letters to Dr Watkinson" saw such things in the year 1776, and reflected, "It is no wonder that it should be part of the Irish character that they are careless of their lives, when they have so little worth living for. The only solace these miserable mortals have is in matrimony, and accordingly they all marry young." In this he made such a mistake as any foreigner might.

Many things led to the custom of marrying young; for instance, the traditional notions handed down from the earliest days, and the hot blood, and the mercenary views of the men. Those marriages

CARRYING TURF

Two baskets of turf a day keep the fire going, and they are carried daily in many places from the bog to the house by some of the family—often the women.

On one occasion, while resting on a hillside, exhausted by the ascent, I asked a girl with a basket if she did not feel tired with carrying such loads. She said she did not, and if I got into the basket she would carry me up—an invitation I declined.

were fatally provident: every wife had a portion, and this was desired even though it was only a pig; every child was considered an insurance against the perils of sickness and age, since he who had transmitted his strength could look for support when he was feeble. But the chief cause of these unions was the fact that the peasants were happy. The young couples started life with a blind hopefulness and a fatal content. Even to-day, if you do more than peer into the shed from the threshold, if you rest under the thatched roof, you may discover that the children are as happy as kings, and that their father is very proud of his home.

As for the want of chimneys and windows, this has been ascribed to an attempt to avoid certain taxes; but that explanation overlooks the eloquent fact that these homes are of a primitive type. Take, for instance, the remains of the stunted primeval buildings at Grimspound,—these indicate that the first builders of permanent houses adopted this fashion. No doubt the poorer Irish, as soon as they ceased trusting to shelters made of wattles, provided themselves with such homes as now belong to their children. If you bear in mind that the cabins were merely shelters from the storms and the dark, and that the doors were not meant to be

shut in the day-time, and would therefore be useful as windows, you may perceive why folk who detested all changes and were not very fond of superfluous labour, remained faithful to the ways of their fathers, and more than pleased with those rudimentary familiar abodes; you may understand how the savour of the smoke of the turf became so dear to them that even after a long absence a whiff of it is enough to make exiles heartsick for Ireland.

There were a great many happy lives led in such homes in the old days. Even Dr Campbell caught a glimpse of another solace besides matrimony, when he witnessed a dance. "Of what extremes is this country composed!" he wrote. "Here everything wore the face of fertility and pleasure. I had heard of vivacity before, and had seen it in individuals; but never till now had I seen it universally pervade so large a mass. The women vied with the men in the display of animal power. You would have said they breathed fire. These people have quick and violent spirits, betraying them sometimes into sudden starts of indecorum. I have seen the whole room in a convulsion of laughter at a false step made by one of the dancers. How different," he continued, "are the effects of the same sensibility in another line!

WASHING DAY IN THE WEST

LAUNDRY work in the west or north of Ireland is done on the border of a running stream, where a turf fire is lighted to boil the water.

I had been strolling through the market, when I saw a poor woman who had lost her purse, containing but two or three shillings. The poor creature wept aloud, and the women about her joined in the lamentation, which had such an effect that a general outcry was the consequence, so piteous and so doleful that the men themselves could not refrain the sympathetic tear." If he had dwelt on these changes of mood, he might have appreciated the singular buoyancy of the peasants.

In those days, they had all the joys of their masters. Since they were not allowed to have pistols or swords, they fought their duels with stumps of hawthorn or oak, simple weapons but sufficiently murderous. The hero who pranced through a fair, brandishing his cudgel, and shouting, "Who'll tread upon the tail of my coat?" resembled Jack Taafe riding his tailless horse. Each was pining to taste the joy of battle. In this, the peasants outstripped the gentlemen; for they improved upon the custom of duelling by indulging in Faction Fights, in which destructive encounters gangs of men smashed one another with cudgels or lopped one another with scythes, joyfully, without any ill-will. These gangs represented rival parishes

or villages or families sometimes; but that was only a detail. In Kerry, for instance, all men named FitzGerald fought all Moriartys, at least twice a year, to commemorate the legend that long ago a Moriarty betrayed an Earl of Desmond. But when a FitzGerald rushed forth shouting, "Who'll show me the face of a tremblin' Moriarty?" he was not thinking of the past; he merely wanted to fight. So, too, the peasants had the revelling; and though this was perforce less costly than that of their masters, they developed it by feasting at funerals, and by holding the Wakes when they assembled to grieve by a dead neighbour's coffin, and remained to carouse. And they had the hospitality, which also was greater because they had so little to give. Like their masters, they welcomed all to their homes, because they were intent on the pleasure of giving and on the giving of pleasure.

In all this they were, as Dr Campbell observed, "careless of their lives," and of everything else, as the landlords were also; but that was not caused by despair. His mistake was natural, and the horror he felt when he saw their condition was shared by many other travellers; for instance, by Young and by Newenham, and Wakefield and Gough. The life

A HAPPY HOME

On taking refuge here from a storm, which continued nearly all day, I was hospitably entertained, and when I left, neither the good man nor his wife would take any remuneration whatever. As a small return, I have endeavoured to give their likenesses in the happy little homestead as I saw it.

they saw was not in accordance with their notions of comfort; and it is hard for the rich to understand how much happiness belongs to the poor. Besides, they were misled by the mournful look of the peasants. While these had the same joys as their masters, they had the same melancholy at the root of them all, and theirs was more visible.

If you see wandering Arabs, the only people equally poor with whom they have much in common, you will be struck by their obvious gloom; but if you grow intimate with them, you will find that it is the chief of their pleasures. Just as the Arab's proud sorrowfulness is quite unconcerned with his complete destitution, so, while these peasants were mournful, it was not because they could see anything amiss with the cabins for which they were eager to pay, or to owe, an exorbitant rent; it was not because they were quite certain that they would always be penniless.

In all this they were akin to the gentlemen, but without imitation. Why should they imitate men whom they regarded as their equals at best? It has been commonly thought that they have a great respect for the "old stocks," the families long ruling among them; but this is one of many delusions. Their attitude has been better explained in a modern

novel, in which one of the characters says, "They show respect for the old sthock, when they think it annoys a new one, or if they are wantin' to soother you. An' all the time they are laughin up the sleeves of their waistcoats, and thinkin' a fine old sthock of a weed it is; and this lad came over wid Cromwell hardly a thousand years ago yet, an' he looks down upon one that was King of all the counthry before the mountains were made." Remember each man was convinced that if he had his rights he would be a ruler himself. When respect was really given, as it often was, it had been earned by the same qualities as would have procured it for the most penniless; when their rich neighbours were loved, as many were, it was not because they were masters, but because they were loving. Among themselves the peasants have always discussed those other gentlemen, the landlords, as if they were judging their equals, or their inferiors when a ruling stock happened to be English; and in such talk they have not given them their usual titles, but familiar and descriptive ones, such as John of the Blankets, or Francis of the Wine, or James of the Girls.

Often when a peasant betakes himself to bed he will cover the smouldering ashes on his hearth

THE CHARITY OF THE POOR

Irish Proverb, "Beg from a Beggar."

instead of extinguishing them, so that they will suffice to make his fire glow in the morning. Take that as a parable. To understand Irish History, you must remember the survival of fires smouldering hidden. When people are astonished to find that nowadays the peasant exhibits so little of the former apparent veneration, they forget, or are unaware, that this was never more than external. When you deal with an Irishman, it is well to remember that he will never forget, and that it is improbable that he will ever forgive. Indeed, if I may use an Irish locution, we are apt to remember things that never happened. Half of the bitterness and bigotry on both sides in Ireland is caused by the memory (that is the belief in the occurrence) of massacres and other atrocities that were never committed.

This reminds me that my country has long been renowned for "bulls," and these call for a word of explanation. The Irish bull is in many cases intentional: in some it is caused by the fact that the speaker is using a language foreign to him, but in more it is only a quicker and more vivid way of expressing his thought. Take that famous example, Sir Boyle Roche's saying, "No man can be in two places at once, like a bird." To my mind it

suggests a bird's quickness of flight admirably. Roche was excusing the Sergeant-at-Arms' failure to seize a man who was at the opposite door of the House of Commons. He was a professional jester; and I have not the least doubt that he could have expressed himself with a deliberate accuracy, if he had chosen. Or take the case of the man who, to express his bewilderment, said, "As soon as I knew where I was, I found I was somewhere else"; or of that other who remarked that "he was never at peace except when he was fighting." In both of these the confusion of thought is only apparent. There are, of course, many idiotic bulls; but these have been made out of sheer amiability, in a desperate attempt to amuse. You will hear them on the lips of the boatmen of Killarney and the car-drivers at Dublin and Queenstown.

"The people of our island," said Curran, "are by nature penetrating, sagacious, artful, and comic." Very often, an Irishman is only comic because he is sagacious. There is plenty of wit; but very little humour. The peasants have always been famous for their quickness of tongue. The other day an English traveller said to his driver, "Why do you speak to your horse in English while you talk Irish to your friends on the road?" "Sure," said the

THE PILLION

In the hilly places of the north and west, where the roads disappear or become paths, the pillion is the usual mode of travelling for women. It is a cushion placed on the back of the horse behind the saddle, on which the woman sits side-ways, holding on to the man with the arm round his waist, and it is surprising at what a pace they can go in this awkward position. I was told it is the custom, after a marriage at church, when the bride and bridegroom return, for all the other couples who have attended the ceremony, to race back to the bride's house, and that, whoever gets there first, welcomes the newly-married couple, and receives special favours during the festivities.

driver, "an' isn't the English good enough for him?" Here was a good instance of an Irish reply; and local traditions preserve many epigrams; such as the one by which a wandering poet avenged himself when he had been slighted by a landlord named Trench. Thus he wrote—

"You will find grace in the pulpit, and wit on the bench;
But 'tis nothing but dirt you will find in a trench."

Indeed, the peasants differed mainly from the landlords in being much more clever and very much more studious. This, I fancy, was due to the fact that they were more Celtic. Their passionate veneration for learning and their zeal in acquiring it, was shown in the old days by the respect they all paid to the Poor Scholars, and by those strange Hedge Schools in which ragged schoolmasters expounded the beauties of Ovid and Virgil to students in rags. Note that the Poor Scholars, who wandered over the country, seeking instruction and publicly debating with others and finding gratuitous welcome wherever they went, followed a custom that was practised in mediæval Europe. For many a day Ireland has been (for good and for evil) behind the times.

In the Middle Ages, men helped one another in

guilds; they were cruel because they were childlike and accustomed to violence; they were religious. In the same way, the Irish peasants have always been prone to form Secret Societies for mutual help; they have often shown cruelty for the same reasons, and for the further one that, setting scant value on their own lives, they were the less reluctant to kill others; their faith has been always profound. Even nowadays they still keep a mediæval simplicity.

Simplicity and kindness and courtesy are their most obvious merits. That was why a German traveller said to me once, "The Irish, when they are bad, they are the worst; but when they are good, oh! I love them; they are so soft." Still, even when they are good, they are not always quite as simple as they seem when they think that you will be pleased by their blunders or when they are being cross-examined in Court.

This reminds me that they have often been blamed for ignoring the Laws. But you should remember that those Laws are not theirs. In the days of Henry VII., Finglas reported, "The laws and statutes made by the Irish on their hills they keep firm and staple, without breaking them for any favour or reward." So too, Sir John Davies,

A FAIR

GENEROUS in their hospitality the Irish undoubtedly are, but when they buy or sell, none are more keen to their own advantage. A fair gives the stranger a considerable insight into these business qualities, for he may watch the natives higgling for hours over a few shillings. The custom is for those who agree to the terms of the others, to slap them on the open hand in token of agreement. When both parties are obstinate, a friendly neighbour sometimes places their hands together with his best advice.

under James I., said, "There is no nation under the sun that love equal and indifferent justice better than the Irish, or will rest better satisfied with the execution thereof, although it be against themselves." And Coke, in his *Institutes*, corroborated this, adding, "which virtue must of necessity be accompanied by many others." But they have never been able to see that their conquerors dealt equal and indifferent justice, or had any right to command them.

Now, if you keep these things in mind, you should understand why their recent attitude has differed so greatly from their former subservience. Some have ascribed their desires to the fact that in the primitive days each clan held its estates in common; but this is far-fetched: I doubt whether many of them had heard of that doctrine, nor have they the least wish to restore that state of affairs. It is true that there is in the Irish mind an essential Socialism on which is founded the extreme hospitality; but it does not apply to the land, for every man wishes to be the owner of some of it. Remember that there was an immemorial hostility, smouldering hidden, a resentment based on a belief in spoliation; and that this was exasperated by the increasing faults of the

landlords, for every year of reckless life found these more embarrassed and therefore more apt to be Absentees, and less able to help their tenants or to refrain from demanding high rents. Remember, too, that the peasants are still in many ways mediæval, and that English Laws and the contracts enforced by them are not in the least respected. Remember that they believe that if they had their rights they would be landlords.

But why did they never assume this attitude before? Well, they had no political power; they were not blessed with the leaders they have found in our days; and, above all, they were greatly inclined to be content. That must have been hard in many cases; but it is wonderful what a man can endure when he is happy. Then came the Famine, and it broke Ireland's heart. Such hopefulness as remained to them turned to another country; and the strongest and the best of them left Ireland for ever. Meanwhile, those who clung to the forlorn cabins were ripe for a mutinous despair.

There had been mutiny among them before, not without reason; but whenever the Catholic peasants had risen in arms since the times of the Tudors they had been fighting for their Church. The chiefs for whom their fathers had fought were

all broken, and the Irish had never been a united and independent nation, so these rebels were intent on regaining religious liberty. That was a thing they had lost; but national freedom and identity had never been theirs. This explains the perplexing history of Ireland's attitude during the Great Civil War. When the Irish under Owen Roe fought for King Charles, it was not out of loyalty. The Irish peasant has never seen that he owes the least loyalty to any English monarch. When Owen Roe changed sides and made terms with the Puritans, it was because he was convinced then that by so doing he was more likely to gain tolerance for his Faith. Again, in Ninety-eight, though the Presbyterian rebels of Antrim, most of whom were of Scottish or English descent, fought to establish a Republic, the Catholic ones took arms for their Creed. It was all very well for the eloquent leaders in Dublin to mimic the French Revolution: the men who died on the Wexford moors were not thinking of that. The Rising of Ninety-eight failed because the Catholic rebels made their part in it a war of religion. That broke the Presbyterian attempt to participate, and dealt a deathblow to the Society of the United Irishmen, which (founded mainly by Protestants)

had from the first aimed at uniting the two Creeds in rebellion.

The attitude we have seen in our times is different. If the peasants are still as religious as their fathers were, certainly it is in a different way. They have changed in many ways since the Famine. In the old days, the inner elation of piety set them above outer discomforts. Formerly they clung to their homes; now they flock to America. The emigration is caused in part by their hopefulness; they see a land of fabulous gold in the shine of the sunset. It is recorded that when Dick Whittington set out, he heard the bells calling, "Turn again, Whittington! thrice Lord Mayor of London"; but when Mike Flanagan leaves his home, sad at heart, he hears them advising, "Go on, Flanagan! Go on, Flanagan! Boss of New York." And those who have not been enticed by such an ambition, those to whom Tammany Hall is still unknown, dream of the incredible wages of which they have heard.

When the emigration began, it was compulsory. The first who went to America had little more choice in the matter than had the Irish whom Cromwell shipped to Barbados; the land was

MARKET DAY

J S Walker

wanted for cattle or for new towns, as in Antrim, and the men who had tilled it were no longer required. In 1776 a traveller wrote, "The landlord who gets his rent without trouble, and the grazier who thrives upon depopulation, prefer cattle to peasants"; and to this he ascribed the vacant look of the fields. After his time, the emigration increased, and it was not retarded by the fact that America was hostile to England; but it only became a national danger when the Famine of 1847 awoke the poor from their dreams. There had been famines before,—indeed, in the barren wilds of the West, hunger was constant, and year after year men died of it; but the one of that winter surpassed them all by so much that they are forgotten, while its remembrance is never put out of mind. To this day it is called "the Hunger." It is not often that any will speak of it. You will hear a man say, "This is a lone part of the counthry now; but yondher road did use to be black with people comin' into the town, before the Hunger"—but I have never met any peasant who would talk of that time. Which is a proof that the thought of it is deep in their hearts, for they speak a great deal about external affairs and not at all about the things that mean most to them. The

remembrance of the Hunger now governs the whole of their lives.

They had feared nothing before; certainly not death, for apart from the piety by which that was made welcome, they had the Celt's readiness to die; but they had not the courage to face such a winter again; and since it appeared to have come on them without any warning, for all signs of that peril had been unheeded by them, they had done with security. Fear banished the emigrants who fled in that time, and though the thousands who follow them still have hopes to delude them, they have inherited that unreasoning terror. Watch any emigrant ship leaving the shore, and you will see very few confident faces; in most you will read not only the natural reluctance of exiles, but also a dread of the alien land to which they are bound and of the menaced life they relinquish.

Some have been surprised by discovering that the emigration has by no means decreased in the last couple of years. This is a time of hope, we are told. Has not England done wonders for Ireland? Beyond doubt it has, for without discussing the wisdom of the Land Act of 1903, we can agree that it was a wonderful remedy. Then why should the people fly from the shore when

THE PIPER'S VISIT

THE travelling musician or neighbour who plays either the bagpipes, flute, or fiddle, is always a welcome guest. His arrival means a dance, often kept up until "cock crow in the morning."

they are about to be given what they are supposed to have wanted? Have they not heard how Parliament is nobly investing an enormous amount of the Ratepayers' money in a bold speculation? Have they not been assured that the English Garrison has been abolished at last, and by England? It might be alleged that their continued flight proves a disgusting ingratitude. Politicians can debate about that; but, as a disinterested observer, I may suggest an explanation to them.

Not long ago, an old peasant was asked such questions as these, and he replied, "I do be hearin' this; but I am thinkin' it would be a cruel time for the poor." I need not say that he was an illiterate and irrational man. In his confused mind there was a lingering notion that the landlords had not been altogether a curse; somehow it seemed to him that he remembered many kind deeds, much generous help given by men who were not overburdened with money, and he did not appear quite certain that this aid would be found when many small farmers had divided the fields. He was not going to emigrate—he was too old, and there was nobody waiting to give him a home on the other side of the Ocean;—but it was obvious

that this amazing intervention of Parliament would not have detained him. Apparently, he thought that the farmers in his part of the country had no very great kindness for the labouring men. There is this to be said for his view,—a resident landlord (and there were more of these than you might imagine) would, if he was not quite inhuman, have a tendency to be fond of his own people because they were his, because their fathers had lived side by side with his for many a year; and it would be probable that the ladies of the Big House would be accustomed to show kindness to the neighbouring poor. The many new owners of the divided estates will not have the same power to help nor the inherited tradition of patronage. It may be better for the labouring men to be taught independence; but they cannot be expected to find pleasure in the lesson. That old peasant's view may be held by many who keep their thoughts to themselves.

As for the farmers, who (instead of continuing to toil in unprofitable fields, while rejoicing in the knowledge that these will, if everything goes well, belong to their grandchildren) obstinately sail to America, there are some excuses for them. There is an Irish phrase meaning "on the brink of the

STEEPLECHASING

IRELAND holds annually the most important horse show in Europe, and steeplechasing may be said to be its national sport. This sketch was made at Claremorris, Co. Mayo.

Francis S. Walker 1904

summer." That time of the year, the last day of the treacherous Spring, is perpetual in our country of hope. When will that summer begin? When the birds sing again in the forest of Desmond. We have been so constantly drugged with hope that it can retain no power on us now. You may tell us that fine days are beginning; but alas! we have heard it all so often before. These men believe that an impossible happiness is awaiting them somewhere; but not in poor old Ireland. Say what you like; and they go sadly and silently, in spite of your arguments.

The Irish peasant is by nature a stationary man. He is a fireside traveller: in his dreams he will wander over the hills and far away. If you can describe far countries to him, he will listen to you with open delight, though it will be probable that he will not believe a single word that you say; but he will not have the least wish to emulate your ridiculous vagrance. You will find a great many who have never gone more than a few miles from the cabins in which they were born, many who would feel utterly lost in a neighbouring parish. For this reason, the Mayo tinkers, who ply a wandering trade, are distrusted because their life is unnatural; and indeed it is more than suspected

that they are under a curse. This natural abhorrence of travel is one of the reasons why the Irish continue to emigrate. The thought of so great a voyage was so dreadful to them, it involved such a wrench, that when once they had grown accustomed to it, accepting it as part of their destined sorrows, they could not unlearn that hard lesson. The Hunger taught them, once and for all, that they must go out from the dear and familiar places.

Besides, though they loved their homes still, it was not with the old happy affection. The hills that had witnessed the long agony of that winter had changed. The weather and the soil of their homes had been the instruments of that wholesale destruction; and from that time the love was mingled with fear. The dark valley in which he abides may be dear to the peasant; but there are hours when it is ghastly to him; the mist on the mountains will remind him of the blight on the fields; and even if he lingers, because he lacks the money required, he is quite sure that it is madness to stay.

What would have happened if the potato had never been brought into Ireland? Perhaps one may conclude that the peasants of every part of the

HOSPITALITY

AWAY from the tourist track, amongst the poor, the frank hospitality which is a feature of the national character is to be found in perfection; often in the humble cabin one meets with charming manners, and learns to understand the full meaning of an Irish welcome.

country would, in that case, have shown more of the virtues now peculiar to those of Donegal. In those Highlands, it is not easy to cultivate even the potato, and therefore the people must derive their subsistence from the sea or from indoor work. This is true also of Connemara; but there the people dreaded the sea, and were so quelled by misfortunes and by their climate that they were never industrious; and they were so much concerned with the Other World that they regarded the trivial affairs of this one with apathy. The potato was easily grown, and would thrive in soil that would bear no other crop; it would survive rains that would be fatal to corn, and it would furnish a food on which an Irishman would be able to keep body and soul together. The Celt is abstemious. Julius Solinus reported of the Irish, that "they hold them appeased with fruit instead of meat, and with milk instead of drink." Who ever saw a fat Irish labourer? Their wives may look cosy enough, though that is exceptional; but the men will be lean. To this day you will find that they attach very small importance to food. This was one of the points in which they differed from their masters; for in the old days the gentlemen loved a table that groaned beneath a

good load of bottles and joints: it was, I believe, a landlord who said "a turkey is an inconvenient bird; it is too much for one, and not enough for two." For these reasons the potato became the staple food of the peasant. It was only too well adapted to suit the facile content which is so easily mistaken for laziness. This food left them weak, and therefore inactive, while it enabled them to keep alive without steady toil: it softened their character, and it may even be that much of their piety was due to their diet.

In the time of the Hunger they at last learnt in what peril they had lived for so long. The one food lost its savour, and there was a new darkness in the mountains for them. The roots of their stock were frozen; and since that time it has been like a tree that has no hold on the ground. Even if the remembrance of the Hunger has grown less vivid (and that is open to doubt, for this is a people that lives much in the past), its effects have increased. The children are now born with the instinct to fly from the land. In this, as in other things, the Celt is reverting to his primitive ways: he is once more afoot in the long pilgrimage westward. Year after year, the land of their birth has less attraction for them; for as it becomes more

EMIGRANTS

THE platform of Killarney Railway Station is usually crowded by visitors of every nationality, attracted by the reputation of its beauties ; but when I entered it one day I found it crowded with many of the natives about to leave it for ever, bound for the far west. Some were cheery, others excited, a very few silent. Among the latter was an old couple seeing off their daughter whose trunk was labelled "Boston." They kept up bravely until the train began to move, and only then broke down.

depopulated year after year, it grows sadder and quieter. The Dances have lost their vigour, the Wakes have no joy in them, and the glad war-cries of the Factions are heard no more at the fairs. The solitude has become overpowering.

Yet those who remain have still much in common with the peasants of a happier time. They are still pleasure-loving; and for that reason they are the more inclined to depart. They still cling to one another; and for that reason their hearts turn to America, where most of their race have found homes. They are more peaceful than ever, and they are contented still, after their fashion. The most obstinate man that ever resisted eviction was proving his content, for he only demanded to be left to himself. Examine some of the farms from which men have been evicted with necessary violence, and you will see that only a very contented man would have thought it worth while to struggle for them.

As for the remnant of the landlords of Ireland, they show less of the nature for which their fathers were famous in the merry old times. That is natural, since so many of them have been educated in England and since the fashions have altered. When their fathers duelled and feasted, English-

men were doing the same, though not with such a noble extravagance of money and life. Also, their fathers had more money to spend. But the changes are all on the surface; the old nature is there, though it is hidden from sight. Sometimes there are glimpses of it; indeed, one might name several men who seem out of place in these prosaical times, and look as if they ought to be wearing snowy wigs and bright silken clothes and a neat little sword. It is probable that if duelling had not been abandoned, there would have been very much less political eloquence. Even in recent times, there have been examples of men who persisted in treading in the steps of their ancestors, such as Carden of Barnane in Tipperary (Woodcock Carden he was named by his admiring tenants, because they could never succeed in shooting him); he was a man as whimsical and brave and outrageous as ever was seen in the days of wigs and snuff.

In one thing the landlords have changed places with their tenants of late. There was a time when the worst grievance of the latter was this,—they had very short leases, or were tenants at will, so they were never secure. Now for several years the landlords have been owners at will. At least, the

"REFRESHMENT FOR MAN AND BEAST"

AT one time a common announcement over an inn door, but now seldom seen.

new Land Act, whatever else it will do, will put them out of their pain. Insecurity was always the curse of Ireland; at no time in its history have either the rich or the poor in that country been safe; and this is one of the facts that did most to control the nature of Irishmen. The Land Act of 1903, whether it was a rational intervention or not, may remedy this for a time; and since it bids fair to eradicate the men of whose faults so much has been heard, while very little has been said of their merits, we may hope that the country will once more become the Island of Saints.

THE ISLAND OF SAINTS

CHAPTER XI

THE ISLAND OF SAINTS

It is not certain that this country has now any right to be called the Island of Saints. That title was given to it a long time ago. Since it was earned by the men and women, who, dwelling in stunted bee-hive cells and cramped cloisters or going out from them to instruct the Saxons and other infidels, taught the beauty of holiness by their ways and their words, Christendom has changed a good deal. Ireland has been instructed in turn, and is beginning to resemble the rest of Christendom. Now it might be more fitly called the Island of Ruins. These titles are not unrelated, since in these times saints do not prosper. Each illuminates Ireland's history; so let us end this brief study by considering them.

Probably it was the Irish who christened their country Insula Sanctorum. Even if that is so, it

must be admitted that they ought to have known best; and their choice of a title—for whether they invented it or not, they adopted it—is a sign that they venerated sanctity. That was why their separate land was sacred to them. The pale hills of Ireland have the beauty of holiness. There is in it the peace of a cloister; it is as quiet as a nun. There is an old Irish poem which has been trans lated thus:—

"A plenteous place is Ireland for hospitable cheer,
Uileachan dubh o!
Where the wholesome fruit is bursting from the yellow barley ear;
Uileachan dubh o!
There is honey in the trees where her misty veils expand,
And her forest paths in summer are by falling waters fanned,
There is dew at high noontide there, and springs in the yellow sand,
On the fair hills of Holy Ireland."

Does not that indicate a virginal country? The dew at high noontide and the falling of many waters in the Island of Woods—these were remembered by those who wandered away from it, as tokens of its immaculate charm, and they felt that whether the people who lived in it were sinners or not, the island was holy.

SAINT COLUMBKILLE'S CROSS, KELLS

STANDS near the foot of the round tower, the entrance door of which can be seen at the usual height from the ground. There are several crosses in this town, but this is the most perfect. The carvings on it are very interesting, those that seem the clearest—"The Destruction of Pharoah's Host"—are on the base.

There is something uncanny about Ireland. Perhaps it is merely this impression of holiness, a thing rare enough now to seem uncanny; but be that as it may, one is apt to be conscious of some unnatural chill, as if the place was haunted. And it is haunted, if one can believe its inhabitants. A man is known by his dreams; and so is a race by its superstitious beliefs. If one is afflicted by tales of Vampires or Were-wolves or grim and abominable ghosts, its character is explained by such dread. You can learn something about Ireland by studying the nature of Irish ghosts. Of these there are many; and among them are two spectral countries, the Vanishing Island and Tyrnanoge.

Nearly all the islands off the coast of the West are barren and wild; but one (so it is said) is an unearthly Paradise. According to ancient traditions, this is Hy-Brazil, The Island of the Blessed; and its inhabitants have, with every other imaginable pleasure, the necessary one of remaining within sight of their former home; but since they come from different parts of that, and had enough of monotony while they were in it, they now enjoy the privilege of travel without leaving Irish waters. This new home has been beheld (it is said) from

Gweebarra in Donegal, from Achill, and from Ballysadare in Sligo, from Connemara, and from the Highlands of Kerry, and from Ballydonegan in the County of Cork. You will observe that all these places are on the Celtic shore; and you will remember that the hopes of the Celts have always turned to the West. The belief in this island brought consolation to the living, because they knew that their dead were happy and near, and because they hoped that they in their turn would find happiness with so slight a removal. But that pleasant shore was not to be attained by the living. Some who sailed out to it never returned; but there is reason to hold that they were drowned before they landed on it. Many others saw it vanish away as they approached.

This is not a mere legend handed down from the past. The belief that there is such an errant and vanishing island is still held by many; and I have spoken with several in different parts of the West who have convinced me that they were convinced. But the belief is held now with a difference. None of the witnesses I met were at all certain that it was an abode of happiness. Some, like an old fisherman who told me about it

A HOLY WELL

TUBERNALTY is situated at the head of Lough Gill under the lea of a richly-wooded hill, and from it flows a stream of the purest water. On the ground above is a roughly-built altar, on which are small statues, vases filled with flowers, and candles in candlesticks. Many pilgrims visit the well and drink the water. Some take off their shoes and headgear, walk round the well three times, then light the candles and say their prayers.

in Connemara, were sure that it was not. "'Tis the same life over again," he said, "they live as they lived here, with little to eat and little ease. 'Tis a counthry like this same; there is no kindness in the hills, and they go fishin' on black nights." How did he know? Well, he had seen the island, he alleged, but his mournful certitude about its affairs was part of his intimate knowledge of the dead. He did not believe in ghosts; but as he told me how the dead came back, solid and only changed by their gloom, seeing with darkened eyes and speaking with hushed voices or else utterly silent, he took it for granted that this was a matter not open to any doubt. A solitary old man, who had cared for nothing in the world except his sheep, was seen more than a year after his death guiding them on the Blue Gable Mountain, while the new shepherd was drunk and allowed them to stray unbefriended; and a young mother came back to her crying child in the night, and took it up in her cold arms and soothed it, without heeding the father;—of such returns as these the fisherman spoke sadly and wearily. They were as certain to him as was the fact that the familiar voices of the dead were heard often on stormy nights wailing and calling. He was a Catholic, as the happier men

who believed in Hy-Brazil were also; but he did not attempt to reconcile these things with his Creed. I have not been able to learn whether this account of the Vanishing Island—The Other Country as it is called in Connemara—is recent, or was held by some while others believed in Hy-Brazil; but I am inclined to think that this was the older form, and that the legend was derived from the sad primitive wanderers, and was altered while the peasants were happy, after which time it resumed its original darkness.

While the folk by the sea had this consolation, they shared another which was a comfort to those who, because they lived inland, could not look for Hy-Brazil. This was the belief in the Irish Fairyland, Tyrnanoge. Other races have known Fairies and Elves, but not with the same intimate and enduring affection. While others have forgotten them, this one has kept the belief in them more eagerly than you might imagine if you were to judge by the little you will hear on the subject. Fear of ridicule and respect for the Fairies inculcate silence. It is well known that they do not like to be mentioned, and that if a man should refer to them, he must be careful to call them the Little Good People. They are Irish,

THE DEVIL'S GLEN, WICKLOW

A ROCKY gorge about 500 feet deep and thickly wooded, through which flows the Vartry river. This sketch was taken at the head of the Glen over the waterfall.

and therefore are pleasure-loving and quarrelsome, kindly and dangerous, and above all things, peculiarly sensitive. In a bright land of peace under the hills they live immortal and untroubled and innocent.

The certitude that so pleasant a land and such a life were so near, brought rest and consolation to many whose lot was different, and it did this the more since there was always a chance of finding the way into Tyrnanoge—the Land of the Young—and becoming one of its people. Sometimes the Fairies coveted a child, and beguiled it away to be happy for ever. In spite of the first grief of the mother, they would have been forgiven for this, if their too keen sense of justice had not caused them to leave one of their own, a Changeling, instead. These Changelings were always wizened and silent, and even if they grew up, remained exiles, apart from all ordinary people, till by dying they found the way back to Tyrnanoge. Not little children alone, but their elders too, were sometimes beguiled; and of these some returned after long years that had seemed to them no more than a morning. It was not everyone that could behold the Little Good People; but many were cheered by glimpses of them, and saw them play

football with dead leaves, or dance on the green raths by the light of the moon. Such was the confident and happy belief.

I have spoken with several who stated that they had seen the Little Good People, and with one old man who appeared certain that in his youth he had almost captured the Leprechaun, the solitary Elf of whom it is told that he sits by the wayside, clad in a green coat and red knee-breeches, bending a little brown face like a withered leaf over a shoe which he always tries to repair. If a man hears the Leprechaun tapping the shoe, he ought to steal up behind him and seize him, for then he will be given a ransom of gold; but he must not take his eyes off his prisoner till it is paid in full, else he will find his treasure all changed to withered leaves. Most of these witnesses were not educated; but I found one that was. He told me that he had never believed in the Fairies till, being out alone very early in the morning, not long ago, he saw some scores of tiny people in green trooping into a rath quite near him, but that when after recovering from his natural amazement, he followed them, he could find no trace of them there. I had his word for it that he was then perfectly sane and sober; and I can bear

evidence that when I disbelieved his account he was extremely annoyed.

There is only one mournful Fairy, the Banshee, whose duty it is to give a warning of death by wailing in the night. The doubtful privilege of her attention is supposed to be confined to the Old Irish families of royal descent. It is not certain whether there is one Banshee to attend to them all, or whether each is entitled to one of its own. Strictly speaking, she is not a Fairy, since the Good People are all diminutive, but a supernatural being related to the usual ghost. She is described as a tall woman in white; but on this point the evidence is weak, for she is heard but not seen. The rest of the evidence about her is strong, as is natural since her notice remains the best proof of a pedigree. Innumerable records and tales vouch for her. A lady, whose word I believe implicitly, told me how when she and her sister watched alone by their father's deathbed, on a night when there was no wind, they heard a heartrending wail repeated thrice in the outer darkness, and therefore abandoned hope. An eminent lawyer, who held no brief for the Banshee, told me how, when he was a boy at Trinity College, he was at cards one night with several others, and all of them heard a similar

wailing beneath in the deserted quadrangle, and how the only one of them who was of Irish descent left them then, saying that his father was dead, and how that belief was verified by news the next morning.

In the West another warning is given. When people lie at the point of death there is heard on the drive (it is said) the sound of a carriage coming at great speed. Some allege that they have seen spectral lights and shadowy horses; but in most cases nothing is visible, there is only that urgent sound on the gravel. It is believed that this carriage is sent to take the souls away. Of course, it only comes for the rich: the poor would not expect such attention. This belief illustrates the old notion that when a man went out of doors he should ride or drive, and that only the poor should trudge.

Are all these legends lies? Should we affirm that no one has ever seen the Vanishing Island or the Little Good People, or heard the Banshee or the Carriage? If so, we must reject the evidence of numerous witnesses who are in other affairs credible and apparently sane. For my part, I am convinced that a great many queer things happen in Ireland. It would be easy to cite many

LOUGH ERNE

One of the most beautiful and largest lakes in Ireland. It is more than twenty miles in length, and is studded with islets, mostly covered with trees. It is difficult to get an impression of its character and extent, except from the high cliffs near Blarney, from which, on a fine day, the islands seem floating on the water.

authorities in support of that view—take, for instance, this passage from Trevisa's version of "Polychronicon Ranulph Higden, Monachi Cestrensis."

"In this land and in Wales old wives and women were wont, and be yet (as me pleyneth) oft for to shape themselves in likeness to hares, for to milk their neighbour's kine, and so steal their milk, and oft greyhounds run after them and pursue them, and ween that they be hares. Also, some by craft of necromancy make fat swine (that be red of colour) and none other, and sell them in cheping and in fairs; but anon as these swine pass any water they turn again into their own kynd, where it be straw, hay, grass, or other turves. But these swine may not be kept by no manner of craft for to dure in the likeness of swine over three days. Among these wonders and others, take heed that in the uttermost ends of the world full oft new marvels and wonders, as though kynd played with larger leave privily and far in the ends that openly and nigh in the middle. Therefore in this island be many grisly marvels and wonders."

From this it is plain that Ranulph Higden perceived in the air of that country something uncanny. If there is any haunted land in the

world this should be it. Wander alone in it on any fine day, and see whether you will not feel some unaccountable oppression, as though you were aware of a misty remembrance of agony or of a foreboding of more. You may have the feeling which is expressed in the poem (not to be found in the Works of Mr Browning)—

"There is something gone wrong, but I don't know what:
The sky is blue, and I am too.
This, I assert, is natural.—Not!
And you?"

There are prosaic explanations, of course. It may be that we should trace the descent of the Little Good People from the early heroes, and conclude that those were derived from the primitive gods. If the tales of the Tuatha-dé-Danann, those conquering wizards, and of the Fenians, should be taken as a confusion of mythology with history that would indicate how the gigantic gods of the Celts have dwindled to diminutive heroes. In this connection it is worth noting that the Fairy raths are primitive tombs. Also, you may remember the legend of Ross Castle in Lough Leane. This was the home of the O'Donoghue of the Lakes, of whom it is told that he was a chief incredibly fortunate and beneficent, and being immune from

LOUGH GILL

Is called the Killarney of the West, which it greatly resembles, having numerous wooded isles and headlands, and being surrounded by mountains with fine views in every direction.

death, still lives in Tyrnanoge, whence he returns on a May morning once in every seven years to his ruined castle, which, as he rides over the lake to it on his white horse, looms briefly from the mists of the dawn as stately and perfect as it was when he reigned. Since it is certain that there was such a chief, it may be concluded that the supernatural part of his history affords a comparatively recent example of the origin of the Fairies of Ireland. This explanation may derive some support from the fact that the men of the West are not consoled now by these tales. They do not think of the Little Good People, but of the Others: they have no trust in Tyrnanoge, but they are reluctantly sure that the Other Country exists. In their shuddering resignation they people that near and remote world with the Tuatha-da-Danann and the dead of all times.

As for the Vanishing Island, that might be ascribed to a mirage; and this explanation appears the more probable since that misty land seems altered in different bays;—for instance, the fishermen of Gweebara alleged that they saw on it a village resembling their own, while those of Ballydonegan said that it was a green and solitary place like the mountain nearest to it. So, too, it is

possible that the tales of the Banshee and of the Carriage and of the voices clamouring above in the dark all were suggested by the sounds of the wind. But even if you prefer such explanations, you will see that the acceptance of these and many similar tales is a proof that the Irish were always intent on a supernatural world. For this reason they saw the Wild Hunt overhead, when another race might only have seen many clouds hurled by a storm. For this reason their country became the Island of Saints.

Just as their Cromlechs and Ogham Stones have always been kept sacred, either through veneration or else through fear founded on traditional awe, so beliefs handed down from Druidical or earlier times have survived amid their long Christianity. It may be that the tales I have mentioned are examples of these: and there were formerly many observances that must have been due to that origin. A few of them survive still in Clare and in Galway and in the islands of the West, but they are gradually dying out. I do not think that red cocks are sacrificed in Clare any longer. Most of these had nothing to do with Christianity; but there were some that had been converted. For instance, there was a custom

CASTLE CALDWELL
ON THE BORDERS OF LOUGH ERNE

according to which the Catholic peasants assembled in "patterns," or "patrons," coming from all the country around, and camping out for several days in holy spots, as by Croagh Patrick or in Glen Columbkille or Gougane Barra, and praying together. This custom was prevalent once; and though it has been discouraged, is still sometimes observed. There seems no doubt that it was derived from the days when the people assembled for Druidical worship. Note that nearly all these patterns were held in solitary and wild places, and that homes of this kind were chosen by the primitive saints. In this they kept to the ways of the Druids, whose shrines are always remote; and it often so happened that the mountains and glens they sanctified had been held sacred when Ireland was Pagan.

The later monks, on the other hand, chose fertile and accessible homes. For instance, in Kerry you will see the walls of Saint Finn Barr's home on an island in dark Gougane Barra, in the core of the mountains, and you will find the ruins of later monasteries in pleasant Killarney. This, I think, is a token of the phases through which Christianity passed in Ireland. When first it was preached there, it won the hearts of the Celts because it

taught self-denial and was founded on sorrow. This can be inferred from the old poems in which Oisin is made to contrast the joyous life of the Fenians with the austerity introduced by Saint Patrick. But when Christianity had come to be part of the Irish nature, it was no longer associated with penitence, it was a fountain of perpetual gladness. Because the Irish were Christian, they were sorrowful but always rejoicing.

Even before they were Christian, they were deeply religious. This we can conclude not only from their Annals and from the great number of Pagan relics, but also from their tongue, for the Gaelic language has, like the Greek, an indefinable suggestion of piety. Like Greek, it has a white and austere tenderness, and some incommunicable thrill. Just as in Greek there are poignant phrases that cannot be rendered in any ordinary language; so there are in the Gaelic. Take, for instance, "Mo craoibhin cno"; you can translate it, "My cluster of nuts," but what has become of its original beauty? And when the Celts write in English they remember that native influence, for their most individual work is white and intangible, as if it was woven from the fabric of dreams. Before our time, Goldsmith and Steele, though of

I UNDERSTAND there are sixteen of these stones in various states of preservation within a radius of three miles. During the month of June, pilgrimages are made to the district by great numbers of persons. All the stations are visited, and the circuit ends at St Columba's Church and Well on the hillside, where each person deposits a stone. The heap has now grown to enormous proportions.

the English of Ireland and exiles in London, remembered it also, for the best of their work was absolutely simple and had the charm of sheer goodness. Nowadays this dominant note of the Celts is incongruous, and the simplicity is apt to seem puerile. Yet you will find it in Anglo-Saxon and early English, and in the childlike Italian of the Fioretti di San Francesco, and in the French of Aucassin et Nicolette. The Gaelic tongue has never grown old.

There was a time when all classes in Ireland were pious; but with the increase of civilisation, sanctity was left more and more to the peasants. They were more purely Celtic and more mediæval, not being altered by travel or communion with foreigners, and they needed piety more. Their lot in this world was so hard that they were prone to find comfort in dreaming of the joys of the next. This is part of the secret of their fatal content and hopefulness. These Celtic habits of mind were fostered in them by their certainty that their vicissitudes were directed by Providence, and that every temporal sorrow was for their spiritual good, and that the next world would afford compensating delight. If this was so, why should they heed transitory hunger or cold? Their

Celtic fatalism now took the form of a holy resignation.

All this explains two things in their more recent history: the almost incredible way in which they were reformed by the Temperance Movement, and their unnatural quiescence when so many of them died of hunger in the days of the Famine. For a very long time drink had been their bane, not because they drank much, but because they ate little. Usquebagh means the Water of Life. Strong drink puts life and warmth in the veins of men whose one food was insufficient at best and was often but scantly provided. Then suddenly, and at the call of a single priest, they renounced it. Father Theobald Mathew was not a great orator; he told them nothing that they had not known long before. The credit of that amazing alteration is due no more to him than to them. When he preached to the English, his words fell on deaf ears; but wherever he went in Ireland, the peasants answered his call in an ecstasy of religious enthusiasm. This may have been partly due to some personal magnetism of his, or to a belief that God had given him an especial power to strengthen all who took the Pledge at his hands. But he was welcome because his hearers longed for that

GLENDALOUGH

"By that lake whose gloomy shore
Skylark never warbled o'er,
Where the cliff hangs high and steep
Young St Kevin stole to sleep."

—MOORE.

AN additional attraction is lent to the sombre beauty of the Upper Lake, Glendalough, by the legend attached to St Kevin's bed, a cavity half way up the side of the cliffs, and difficult of access. Those who achieve this feat are told that if they wish for anything while there it will be granted within the year.

strength; though they were degraded, still at heart they were saints. And when so many of them fell away from him in the time of the Famine, it was because they were saints no longer, having learnt to despair. Yet in that time the victims were led still by their old sanctity. Men starved with food in sight; they saw their wives and children dying of hunger, and never lifted a hand. They were famous for courage, and their children and wives were most dear to them; but they left the loaf in the baker's shop, and the corn and the cattle in the landlord's field. Men and women alike believed that the Hunger was sent by God, and for that reason they died without complaining.

There is a story of a peasant who had known many calamities, and being asked by a friend whether he wanted anything, answered, "Only the Day of Judgment." It was in a similar spirit that the peasants endured many things, making light of them, because they looked forward to that Day when they would have justice, and after brief trouble would find eternal joy. There was an inner light that made them forget the darkness around. Though they have altered and are now more concerned with the light of common day, that intrinsic piety is deep in their hearts. "Scratch a

Russian, and you will catch a Tartar." Scratch an Irishman, and you will find a saint. You may have to scratch somewhat deep, and I cannot assure you that it will be a safe operation, for Irish sanctity has often been militant, like Saint Columba's; but in the least saintly of Irishmen there is the stuff of which martyrs are made.

This is one of the causes of the old-fashioned bigotry. In studying that antipathy, you should remember that its origin was racial in part, since most of the Celts remained Catholics, and was in part political, since for a long time the Government was exclusively Protestant. Now there are many Catholics of English descent, and not a few of the leading Protestants are Celts, while there are landlords and tenants of either religion, so those excuses for bigotry are things of the past. Also you must make some allowance for the national love of fighting. But the antipathy is mainly religious; and however deplorable it may be, is a proof that the Protestants and Catholics are zealous on behalf of their creeds. The Orange riots still prove Ireland's militant sanctity.

It is plain that in this the sanctity has been detrimental; but was it ever anything else? It might be contended that Ireland has been punished

far more for its virtues than for its vices. After all, were its continual misfortunes a punishment? It has a dedicated look, which was recognised long ago when it was called the Island of Destiny, Inis Fail. That name was bestowed (it is said) by the Tuatha-dé-Danann when they brought with them from Greece the Stone of Destiny, Lia Fail, "Saxen fatale," as Boetius called it. This, I may remind you, was the one on which the Kings were enthroned at Tara, and (if we can believe the historians) was afterwards taken to Scotland and thence to Westminster Abbey, where it has since been used in all coronations. Thus since the English Kings claim descent from the Scottish ones, who traced their blood from those of Ireland, that country has subjugated England;—a triumph of which Westminster Hall's roof of Irish oak and Westminster Abbey's Seat of Coronation are symbols. But, to my mind, the belief in the predestination of that stone, justified though it seems to have been, was no more than a token of the knowledge that Ireland itself was set apart in some particular way, and the Royal Seat had its name from its prominence in the Island of Destiny. Ireland has always been dedicated to sorrow. On all that quiet land has reposed the benediction of

pain. Long ago an Englishman wrote a poem in which he fancied Christ saying:

"Should I alway feedë thee
With children's meat? Nay, love, not so!
I will prove thy love with adversity,
Quia amore langueo."

ST KEVIN'S CHURCH

WITH its surrounding architectural remains, St Kevin's may be said to be the centre of the archæological interest of the Seven Churches. Glendalough is called by Sir Walter Scott "the inestimably singular scene of Irish antiquity." It is a very fine example of the double-vaulted oratory, resembling those at Kells, Meath, and Killaloe, but unlike them it has a miniature round-tower belfry; they date from the sixth century, and are the oldest houses in Ireland.

THE ISLAND OF RUINS

CHAPTER XII

THE ISLAND OF RUINS

COUNTRIES have their fates. England suggests a summer noon, Ireland an autumn morning. One has a comfortable look, as if any disaster could be but an unusual cloud; the other seems moulded for sorrow. One is crowded and prosperous; the other is lonely and fallen. You might think that Ireland's condition was the work of a conqueror who made a solitude and called it Peace, and this theory would be supported by the number of ruins, for in every part you see the wrecks of old castles and churches and abbeys, and—a sight more pathetic—the desolated homes of the poor; but this is a deceptive appearance, for if you enquire into the history of those remnants you learn that many of them were made by the Irish, and that others were merely left to decay. Irish landscapes are often made to look more unfortunate by the

bare walls of roofless cabins among the hedges or alone on the hills; for each will tell you of hearths now cold and of families vanished. There is truth enough in that, for many of them were tenanted once by people who afterwards emigrated; but when English rustics have gone they have not left such sad tokens. The wrecked survival of these cabins was caused by Irish ways. The Irish peasant preferred to build a shed for himself rather than use one in which some other family suffered, and he did not wish to be haunted by its former inhabitants or its ancient ill-luck. Because the cabins were rudimentary, they were built at small cost; and there was no need to pull down the old ones, since the fields were abundantly provided with stones. Also, he knew that it was unlucky to take stones from the dead. This belief guarded the ivied hulks of the castles too, while those of ecclesiastical buildings were further protected by veneration. In addition to this the peasant saw that if the walls were kept standing they would be useful as shelters for cattle or for men caught in storms. For which reasons he left them alone, not feeling that they were unsightly or out of place. Nor are they, for the weather of Ireland tinted them soon, and they seem only too natural; they

THE VALE OF AVOCA

THE meeting of the rivers Avonmore and Avonbeg in the Vale of Avoca is the scene of Moore's lines:

> "There is not in the wide world a valley so sweet
> As the vale in whose bosom the bright waters meet."

The great tree in the foreground called "Moore's Oak," under which it is said he composed the verses, is now almost decayed, through the vandalism of those who have stripped the bark to keep it as a memento of their visit.

endow that silent country with much of its mournful attraction.

Was Ireland ever without their suggestion of calamity? It is obvious that many are recent, and that others were made by Cromwell or Sidney (Big Henry of the Beer, as the Irish called him) or their partners in the gradual conquest, while most of the abbeys were wrecked after England was Reformed. From this we can conclude that their number has been greatly increased since the English improvements began. But since that time the most conspicuous of them have been permanent. In the merry old days of the eighteenth century they stood like skeletons at a feast. Then, as now, they were eloquent of Irish ill-luck and Irish resignation. Swift wrote of "the general devastation in most parts of the Kingdom, the old seats of the nobility and gentry all in ruins," and the contemporary or later explorers agreed with him. There can be no doubt that even the inhabited houses then appeared in most cases neglected and ruinous in comparison with English abodes, and that the look of decay was increased by the solitary remnants around them. As for the times before the conquest became effectual, you have only to read the Annals of the Four Masters

or any other old record; on every page of them you will learn how kings and chiefs and knights harried their neighbours, burning their holds. So it is safe to decide that ever since building began Ireland has always been stocked with prominent ruins.

This is natural, since it has always been divided and always an Island of Soldiers. The courage of its people was vain because they were divided. While less heroical nations conquered others and were enriched by their spoils, this one, apart from the world, ravaged itself. The Irish fought one another because they were penned in this cloistered island and because they were Celts. Unfortunate places were left to unfortunate races. Thus you find the Celts holding the Highlands of Scotland, the Welsh mountains, and the hard moors of Cornwall and Brittany. In those they were separate (does not Wales mean the Country of Strangers?) and therefore unaltered, and they were inspired with the melancholy joy of the sea. In those they found rest when their pilgrimage to the sunset was limited by the Atlantic; and loving them, they became dwellers in a land of illusions and children of the mist and the waves. Some hold that the Arabs and Moors are Celtic in origin

also; and it is certain that there are Cromlechs to be found in Algiers, and that Ireland's Annals narrate that its Fomorian stock came from North Africa. Some credit the Spaniards with the same derivation; and there are many arguments in favour of that; for instance, Don Quixote was a typical Irishman. The three books in which you can best study Ireland are *Don Quixote*, the *Imitation of Christ*, and *Tristram Shandy*. But for my part I hold that the only true Celts in these and other stocks are the unfortunate peoples, such as the Basques and the wandering Arabs. The Celt was always unlucky and content with ill-luck.

It was a Welsh bard who said of his countrymen, "They always went out to battle, and they were always defeated." This was equally true of the Irish. And their especial pugnacity was, I believe, due to two causes—the survival of primitive ways in this End of the Earth, and the strange peace that brooded over the hills. They lived in the exasperating hush of a cloister. There is a saying still in the West, "It is better to be quarrelsome than lonesome." This was their maxim: they fought and were riotous when the unnatural loneliness and peace of their land were beyond

their endurance. In that consecrated seclusion a man had to be either a saint or a soldier, or both.

As far back as their history or mythology goes, their favourite occupation was fighting. This can be learnt not only from their Annals but also from outer evidence. Julius Solinus recorded that when one of their women gave birth to a son she placed the first food in his mouth on the point of his father's sword. Tacitus, while recording their courage, recognised the chief source of their weakness, for he said that Agricola was confident of subduing their country with only one legion, because he counted on obtaining allies after he landed. In after days, Giraldus Cambrensis related that when they christened their sons they left the right arm unbaptized, so that it should be pagan. Spenser wrote, "I have heard some great warriors say that in all the services which they had seen abroad in foreign countries, they never saw a more comely man than an Irishman, nor he that cometh on more bravely to his charge."

These are only a few of the witnesses that could be cited to prove that military fame. Unluckily, it was not earned in united attacks. The many miniature nations battled against one another, and

BLARNEY CASTLE

THE lovely groves and grounds that surround the castle had more interest for me than the structure itself. However, I thought I must kiss the Blarney stone, and proceeded to the top of the castle, about eighty feet high; I found the stone was about four or five feet down from the top, and that it would be necessary to stoop over, head down, and hold on by bars, or be held by the legs. Seeing me hesitate, a man asked me: "Are you afraid?" "I am." "Well, no man that's afeard ought to go a-kissing. All kissing should be done sudden; when you hesitate it's serious. Make way for that young lady, she's not afraid." The feat accomplished, he cried out, "A cheer for the young English lady." "No," she replied, "Amurrican!"

did not desist from that even while they were also concerned with the activity of the Danes and the Normans, nor afterwards, for the Old Irish fought among themselves and against the English of Ireland, while both had their wars against the English of England, till in the wavering scales was cast Cromwell's preponderating sword. After that there was one more campaign, when the Catholic Irish took arms for King James, not for his sake (to this day he is known by an opprobrious title), but on behalf of their creed. Then the battles of Aughrim and the Boyne taught the wisdom of quietness. It is still told in the West, how, on the night of the battle of Aughrim, the Tuatha-dé-Danann were seen by many to dance on the raths. They were rejoicing (it is said) because the Milesians, who had conquered them a very long time before, were broken at last. It seems that in this country the dead are no more able to forget than the living.

Since that day Ireland has known peace. This, though it was broken once by a partial rebellion and was formerly enlivened by duels and Faction Fights, became the chief cause of the national sadness. Still, in that deprivation of war there have been comforts; it has been possible to fight about

religion and politics, though not in the old glorious way, and men have been able to cling to the belief that their country will see battles again. In Connemara, trust is still put in a prophecy, according to which, the greatest and last battle of the world will be fought there beside the Mountain of Gold.

Meanwhile, those who could not abide that deprivation went "out on their keeping," not on Irish hills as their fathers had done, but on foreign shores. Those soldiers of fortune preserved the military fame of their home. Nor did the emigrants allow it to dwindle. When the United States asserted their freedom, it was with the help of the exiles from the Protestant North; and when they waged their Civil War, Irish Brigades destroyed one another. In our times Ireland provides its former antagonist not only with private soldiers second to none, but also with field-marshals and admirals.

Has all this courage been vain? Many foreign fields were enriched by the squandered blood of the Irish. It is related that when Sarsfield (whose first laurels had been gained when he fought against William of Orange) took his death-wound in battle abroad, an exiled soldier of France, his

last words were, "Would God that this blood had been shed for Ireland!" When, in the American Civil War, Cobb's Irish Confederates, holding the woods beside Fredericksburg, saw the men of the Federal Irish Brigade charging up from the river, they recognised them by the green that they wore, and an officer said, "They are Meagher's men! My God! what a pity." In that war the Irish enemies did battle for the States in which they were at home; but the soldiers of fortune wasted their blood for foreign countries and for causes not theirs. When they fought against England on many fields, they encountered their own countrymen often. From the days of Crécy and Agincourt, Irishmen have never been lacking, and have never been laggards, in the armies of England. Even in Queen Elizabeth's wars there were some, like the Black Earl of Ormonde and his followers, carrying fire and sword through their own land in her service. Even Cromwell had many Irish allies, some of whom, like Lord Inchiquin, surpassed him in ruthlessness. When the Wexford men rose in Ninety-eight, there was an incident that could only have happened in Ireland.

This was during the battle of New Ross. The rebels were triumphing, and as they charged over

the long wooden bridge in a wild crowd, all crop-headed, ragged and desperate, armed only with pikes, following a green banner that bore the words "Death or Liberty," they were met by the soldiers, pig-tailed and powdered men, wearing plumed helmets, high stocks and red coats, swinging together rigidly at a word of command, fighting mechanically. At first the soldiers reeled back; but then their leader, General Johnson, plunged forward alone, calling to them, "Irishmen, will you abandon your countryman? My brothers, will you abandon our flag?" And the flag to which he pointed was the English one, glowing red through the smoke of the burning houses and still fluttering over the captured Three Bullet Gate. Then the soldiers followed their countryman against their countrymen, charged with the bayonet, and broke the rebellion in rescuing the flag of their conquerors. Those dissimilar combatants had been reared in like homes, in thatched cabins apart on the moors or assembled in peaceful and disorderly villages. They were not even separated by creeds, for many of the soldiers were Catholics.

To-day you will see the men of the Irish Constabulary, soldiers in everything but the name, and excellent ones, disciplined and martial and fear-

INNISFALLEN

"Sweet Innisfallen, long shall dwell
In memory's dream that sunny smile,
Which o'er thee on that evening fell
When first I saw thy fairy isle."

—MOORE.

THE island of Innisfallen in the lower lake of Killarney is remarkable for its beauty, traditions, and legends. On it was a monastery, and there were written the "Annals of Innisfallen," now in the Bodleian Library, Oxford.

less, patrolling the quiet roads in the fields or the scarcely more animated streets of the towns. Their boyhood was passed under thatched roofs or in such somnolent towns as they watch; and their manhood is spent in controlling their countrymen. Nor is that task uncongenial, for it might be said that in Ireland the Irish constables and soldiers have chances of harassing their natural enemies. This would account for part of their zeal; but not for the contrast between them and their undisciplined brothers. Why have they changed? Because being Irish they love martial discipline and are faithful to their salt.

Seeing an Irish soldier, dapper and spruce, you might imagine him entirely transformed; but the change is on the surface; and if you are baffled by his moods, you should study his nature where you can find it unmasked, in the home of his childhood. Strip him of his uniform, free him from orders, and set him to till rocks and owe rent for them and be lulled by the moist air and be surrounded by the kind negligent ways, and he will be shiftless again, slouch as his father did, and be as contented a man as ever smoked a black pipe full of wind happily when tobacco was lacking. While he is in the ranks he is governed by his Celtic fidelity and his

love of fights for their own sake, regardless of the rights of a quarrel. If duty called him to Ireland, he would gratify an inherited tendency to fight against countrymen. But that tendency must not be mistaken for hatred : our fights are compatible with brotherly love.

When Meagher's Irish Brigade was encamped beside the Potomac, its men began singing an Irish ballad one night around the bivouac fires, and then it was echoed from the darkness in the opposite woods, for their Confederate countrymen lifted the chorus. Those enemies remembered their bond then, just as they did when Meagher's men died in a last mad assault on those impregnable woods. Belfast is the Orange stronghold, and yet the most bigoted Catholic takes pride in it because it is Irish. There is affection in all his hostility ; and in the least Orange parts of the South you may hear the doleful and wandering ballad-singers chanting,

> "The Lord in His Mercy be good to Belfast
> The grief of the exile she soothed as he passed."

Talk with one of those stern constables when he is off duty, and you will find him a patriot. In all our loved battles we remember the bond.

The truth is that in Ireland we have a limited

outlook. Just as the clansmen of old followed their chiefs and slaughtered their neighbours joyfully, and as the eighth Earl of Kildare's retainers wrought havoc in Ulster when he was Deputy, and as the Black Earl of Ormonde's men hunted the Crippled Geraldine when the Dark Wood of Desmond was white with snow, and as the O'Briens of Clare sacked Cashel Cathedral when wavering Inchiquin was fighting for Cromwell and obeyed him as gladly when he fought for King Charles; so the Irish and Catholic soldiers charged with Mountjoy and Johnson at New Ross, and to-day Irish and Catholic constables keep order in Ireland. When the Celt is controlled by his fidelity he will render an impartial obedience. This is one of our many mediæval traits, for in the Middle Ages no man who served was affected by the rights of a quarrel, he was no more than a weapon in the hands of his master. This perpetual limitation has done much to make Irish courage vain. Moreover, that restricted valour has caused most of the country's sufferings, since a less warlike race would have been subjected with ease.

Certain it is that Ireland has always been haunted by a curious ill-luck. When King Brian routed the Danes at Clontarf, he was killed in the hour of

victory (so the Annals relate), struck down while he knelt to pray after the battle, and thus his triumph was nullified. When in 1579 Sir James Fitz-Maurice of Desmond had seized Dun-an-oir, the Fort of Gold, in the Highlands of Kerry, and held it with an army of foreign veterans, and displayed Spain's yellow flag and the Pope's standard above it, thus bringing the Irish rebels the help they had demanded so long, he was struck down in a chance brawl at the Ford of Clonkeen. And still (if one can believe many witnesses) unearthly sounds of battle, the clashing of invisible arms and the shouting of victors and the shrieks of the vanquished are to be heard at night once every year on the field of Clontarf and among the mossy remains of the Fort of Gold. When General St Ruth led the Irish at Aughrim, the first cannon shot killed him. When in 1796 a French fleet of forty-three vessels, carrying two generals, Hoche and Grouchy, and fourteen thousand men, sailed to assist an Irish rebellion, the weather defeated it; for though the English admiral was evaded, only sixteen of the ships reached Bantry Bay, and then they were baffled by such a gale from the land that after a week's buffeting in the surf between the snow-covered mountains of the country they sought, the

THE DARGLE

A FEW miles above Bray is a wooded glen that gives a good impression of the beauties of the scenery of Wicklow. In spring-time, when many of the trees are in blossom, and the river in flood, it is seen to great advantage.

attempt was abandoned. There have been scores of such chances, and these have resembled the private ill-luck that has haunted the Irish.

It is probable that you have heard that singular phrase, "the English Garrison." This is a humorous method of describing the landlords. You will partly appreciate its felicity when you remember that among them there are the descendants of the Irish princes, still claiming the old titles; for instance, the O'Conor Don, the MacDermot, and the O'Donoghue, and others who bear English ones—for instance, Lucius O'Brien, fifteenth Lord Inchiquin, who is the heir of the Kings of Thomond; and Dermot Bourke, Earl of Mayo, who is sprung (it is said) from Toby of the Ships, son of Grace O'Malley. Besides these there are among them the representatives of the Geraldines, the Butlers, the La Poers, the FitzMaurices, and of the Galway Tribes; and of the later English of Ireland, such as the Chichesters and the Beresfords, and of many Cromwellian families who have been for a long time notoriously Irish. But you will not see the whole merit of the phrase unless you bear in mind how England has always treated that Garrison.

The Old Irish might have looked for hostility, though as a matter of fact they had showed little

enough in the beginning. Is it not recorded that all the five Royal Clans, the MacMurroughs of Leinster, the O'Connors of Connaught, the O'Neills of Ulster, the O'Melaghlins of Meath, and the O'Briens of Munster, welcomed the Normans? But the English of Ireland, the Normans and the others that copied them in the following centuries, had reason to hope for goodwill. Yet in 1342, one hundred and seventy years after Strongbow landed, King Edward III. "resumed" all their estates and only restored them ten years later because he had found the confiscation impossible. Next Lionel of Clarence tried to confiscate part of the realms of the De Burgos in Connaught. Then France and the Wars of the Roses distracted England's attention. Under Henry VIII. there was talk of driving all the Irish beyond the Shannon, and colonising the rest of the country anew; but he, either through wisdom or on account of the engrossing nature of his private affairs, refrained from this, and was content with the estates of the Geraldines. Next Mary Tudor appropriated and colonised Queen's County and King's County, naming them after herself and her husband, Philip of Spain; and then Elizabeth waged an exterminating war, in which, like the Geraldines of Desmond, many English of

Ireland were despoiled for the benefit of the English of England. Next James I. confiscated and sold Ulster. Under his son, Charles I., Strafford attempted to find a similar source of profit in Connaught by invalidating the titles under which the English of Ireland held their lands. Then came Cromwell with his Partition, and after him William of Orange. Then came the Penal Laws, which succeeded in ruining most of the Catholic Old Irish and English of Ireland. After all these signs of favour came the Encumbered Estates Act, and other remarkable benefits. Was all this the Garrison's pay?

Without discussing the question whether they deserved it or not, we can conclude that the landlords shared the ill-luck of their country. As for the peasants, their part of it is sufficiently known. Both these classes may now be ranked among the Ruins of Ireland. Why has nobody prospered there except in that Fort of the Strangers, the Protestant North? Spenser wrote, "They say it is the Fatal Destiny of that Land that no purposes whatsoever which are meant for her good will prosper." After three hundred years we have all the more reason to put trust in that saying. Yet when the Irish leave their home many are fortunate.

The fact is, that while they are in Ireland they share the doom of the Celt.

The Irish Celt is a spendthrift of life and gold, valuing neither. That is the clue to the tangle of Ireland's history. He is aware of the solitude in which every man lives and dies: other men may not heed it till the last hour when it is patent to all; but the look of his country keeps it before him. He knows that companionship must be incomplete and that love is vain. The Highland Scots have a saying, "As loveless as an Irishman"; and though you might reject this as unjust, if you thought of the clinging companionship and the mutual tenderness to be observed in every class, for all that it goes to the root of the matter. In Ireland we are gregarious because we are solitary, and loving because we commiserate our universal deprivation of love. This it was that guided our saints, who chose to dream alone of a love that was enduring and perfect.

Our ruins are dear to us because they denote the vanity of human endeavour. If you could make our home prosperous and crowded with factories, it would be Ireland no more. The English Black Country is like the crest of a volcano, whether the smutty shafts vomit foul

smoke or are topped by horrible flames in the night. You feel that if it was ever green and pure, that was because the fire beneath had no outlet. But in Ireland the rare smoke of a factory seems as alien and futile as does a little black cloud on a fine summer morning. You feel that the air is but briefly contaminated, and that in the noisiest place silence remains supreme.

In fortunate countries the ruins appear accidental. When in England you come on one of the few surviving wrecks of the monasteries, you are apt to believe that it must have been retained as an ornament, and to wonder why no one has turned it to agricultural uses or pulled it down for the purpose of employing the stones. There was a time when the Religious Orders possessed a third of the soil of England, and had many hundreds of stately homes in the shires; but now, though a few of these are inhabited still, not by monks, and though there are chapels that once adjoined monasteries and now are preserved because they are useful as pigstyes or barns, the majority of their buildings have vanished. In Ireland the ruins appear essential: no landscape would seem Irish without them. In their seclusion they dominate the sad hills around. Silent though they

are, they express the spirit of Ireland. Go to Cashel, and try to imagine how different the landscape would seem if the lone Rock and its venerated burden were gone. The Rock itself was cast there by some supernatural being, either an ancient god or the Devil (so it is said); and if you venture to doubt this, you will be silenced by the fact that it rises suddenly from a cleft in which nothing resembles it, while there is visible in the distant mountains a hollow shaped in its likeness. It stands among fertile and unfortunate moors. This was a land worth many blows, and innumerable ones were exchanged for it; but now it is as empty and silent as the fortified cathedral that once crowned Cashel of the Kings. Without that tall ruin, the scene would resemble a church lacking a spire. Paint Devenish and then delete the ivied remains from your picture, and you will see that it is dead and has no longer a soul.

These are the solid ghosts haunting our land. In our ignorance we are not told by them of definite sorrow, but of a vague load of calamity. Some have no history extant: nobody knows what was the meaning or the use or the date of the Round Towers that stand mysteriously unimpaired in our glens. Learned men have decided that

THE ROUND TOWER ON DEVENISH ISLAND

WHICH is situated on Lough Erne, about two miles from Enniskillen, is said to be one of the finest in Ireland. Near it are the remains of two churches, around which are burial grounds still used. The funerals of those buried here are very impressive, and are conducted in a procession of boats over the lake, starting from the Port of Lamentation, in Portora, Enniskillen. In the lower churchyard are some interesting tombs, and a stone coffin, in which some people lie down, because it has been a saint's bed, and is so called. In the upper yard there is a small stone cross of about seven or eight feet high, unlike the ordinary Celtic cross, and of elegant design and proportions.

these were built either as places of refuge from the Danes, or as belfries by the primitive monks, or by the Druids for the purpose of lighting the Beltane Fires that should answer those that shone on the hills, or by the earlier priests whose worship was that of the Phœnicians, or for some other reason in times of which nothing is known. If you lived in dark Connemara, and believed that the solid dead were your neighbours, and might at any time come to your house and sit indifferent and cold by your fire, it is not probable that you would display much commercial activity or be greatly concerned with the little and brief affairs of the living. So our ruins remind us that all our joys and afflictions are little and brief.

All who settled in Ireland found themselves apart and enjoying an unnatural youth. As a man finds refreshment in visiting the haunts of his boyhood, and feels that he would have more if he could renounce the unwelcome wisdom of age, so they took pleasure in ways that had been dear to their fathers a long time before, and were by no means unwilling to adopt them in turn. Because this was the Oldest of Islands it was the youngest: the life in it always remained simple and kind and unwise. Here they learnt the old wisdom that

others had rejected as folly. Here they found Tyrnanoge, the Land of the Young, and forgot. When the Greek wanderers tasted the Lotus on that other enchanted shore where it was always afternoon, they relinquished all their anxieties and all their possessions. So the settlers became free from old ties and burdens, and with a fresher delight, for it is always morning in Ireland. Nor was there any gloom to deject them, for in that country of sorrow there is a happiness that is not of this world; in the core of its affliction there dwells a penetrating joy.

These things conquered the conquerors, and by so doing made the English attempts ineffectual, since the new garrisons were each in their turn enlisted in the ranks of the Irish. And this is the justification of England's behaviour towards each of those garrisons. All who settled in Ireland suffered because they ceased to be English. Yet they had compensations for that; and even now when so many of them have acknowledged a final defeat, and reverting to ordinary life have relinquished that separated home, the enchantment is felt by them still, though in other places there is wealth to be had and things that many covet.

The secret of Mysticism is to be found in an

exceeding simplicity. So, too, the young ways of Ireland, like those of children, are only perplexing because they are too simple to be understood by the old. Children are not reluctant to quarrel, and yet they have an abiding peace rarely to be known by their elders; even though the toys are all broken, you will find them content. In the same way we are peaceful and contented in Ireland: under all our misfortunes we have the buoyancy of childhood and Spring. Here are some verses I made when I should have been rejoicing in London and all its rich accumulation of grime, and with them I finish this book; not gladly, for if you have been able to find no pleasure in reading it, you can take comfort in the knowledge that writing it was a pleasure to me.

"In the Island o' Ruins, remembrance o' grief
Hallows the hills, as when summer is slowly
Fadin' in darkness, the fall o' the leaf
Makes the woods holy.

"Green are the woods though the mountains are grey;
Spring is too young to remember old doin's.
Ah! but I wish I was roamin' to-day
In the Island o' Ruins!"

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